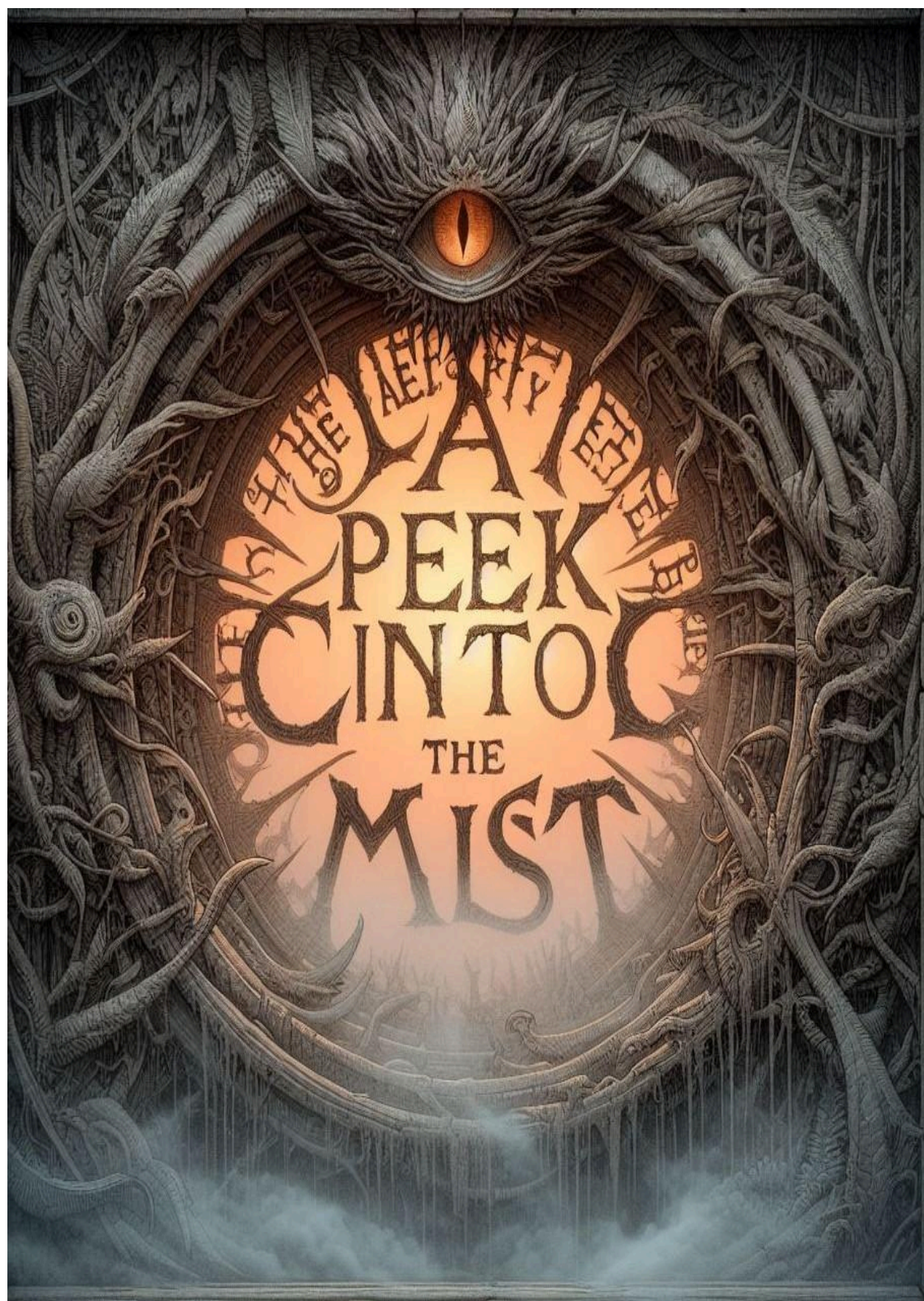


Curtain Call Chronicles: A Collection of Dramatic Masterpieces





Cast of Characters

Minister of Marriage

Ananias Dare

Eleanor White

Sir Francis Drake

George Dier

Tomycin Cooper White

John Berges White

Isabelle Frobisher

Martin Frobisher

The Congregation

Aurthur Barlow

Simon Fernando

Philip Amadas

Head poetess

Scipio

1st Pikeman

2nd Pikeman

3rd Pikeman

Colonial swordsman

Door guard

Escort

Virginia Dare

Gabriel Harvey

Marjorie Harvey

Virginia Sorceress

Ring bearer

John white

John Rolfe

Christopher Cooper

Act One

Scene One

St. Bride's Church,
Fleet Street, London, England

Wedding ceremony
Large congregation

Enter Minister of Matrimony, Ananias Dare, Eleanor White

Minister of Matrimony: Dearly beloved, do ye, Elanor White, take this man,
Ananias Dare, to be thy lawful wedded husband?

Eleanor White: I do.

Minister of Matrimony: And Elanor White, shall ye forsake all others, clinging
only unto him, being totally submissive, obedient as a
good wife should always be, placing his concerns and the
concerns of thy future family above all others including
those of thine own, for all time thus forward, for as long as
ye twain shall live?

Elanor White: (*gazes into Ananias Dare's eyes, smiles*) I do

Minister of Matrimony: And do thee, Ananias Dare, take this woman, Elanor
White, to be thy lawfully wedded wife, to cherish
above all others, in sickness and in health, being always
obedient to her each and every need, preferring the good
of her and thy future family, above any and every
concern of thine own?

Ananias Dare: (*gazes into Elanor's blinking eyes, smiles*) I do

Minister of Matrimony: And Elanor White, doest thou take this man, Ananias Dare, to have and to hold from this day forward, for richer or poorer, for fair or fouler, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us depart, according to God's Holy Ordinance; with this congregation as thy mortal witness who shall stand in condemnation should the need so-arise?

Elanor White: (*gazing into the eyes of Ananias, smiling, blinking*) I do

Minister of Marriage: And Ananias Dare, do ye take this woman, Elanor White, to have and to hold from this day forward, for richer or poorer, for fair or fouler, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us depart, according to God's Holy Ordinance; with this congregation as thy mortal witness, who shall stand in condemnation should the need so-arise?

Ananias Dare: (*smiles, gazes into Elanor's eyes*) I do

Minister of Marriage: (*nods toward the ring bearer*)

Ring Bearer: (*carries a golden band upon a white pillow of satin, walks, pausing before Ananias*)

Minister of Marriage: You may place the ring upon Elanor's finger.

Ananias Dare: (*places the ring on Elanor's left third finger from her index*)

Minister of Marriage: (*Opens the bible, gazes down*) Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh, thus saith the holy scriptures. (*raises head, gazes toward the congregation*) The spring has its birds as we have recently witnessed. Let there be nests, beautiful speckled eggs, and little birds to come. The livestock pairs and young emerge and fruit trees bear fruit.

All is well in the end with the earth and movement of nature,
when it is lent into the hand of God Almighty. How much
more so then, should it be with men and womankind?
(pauses, gazes out, smiles) Does any person among the
congregation have any reason to make known, that this man
and woman should not be married?

Congregation: *Silence, pause.*

Minister of Marriage: Very well then. I present before you on this day of June,
1583, Mr. and Mrs. Adonias Dare.

Congregation: *(claps)* Blessed! Blessed. Long life and large brood!

The couple: *together bow.*

Minister of Marriage: Mr. Ananias Dare, ye may kiss the bride.

Ananias Dare: *(Smiles, Lifts veil covering bride's face)*

The couple: *embrace and kiss before the congregation.*

The congregation: *(claps)*

Minister of Marriage: My dear couple, bound in sacred matrimony before thy
brethren throughout the community in which ye both call
home, and the very face of God Almighty himself, go now
in peace and life-long serenity. Know henceforth that like
birth, and might I dare say, death itself, today's bond is
simply a beginning in a new secular journey into the
unknown, not any sort of conclusive end. Take pleasure in
the gratifications given freely from one unto the other.
Withhold not, might I say. Face the day before thee with

personal conviction and feel free to voice thy consternation, yet see them all through in newly found determination, as the will of God Almighty wouldst have. In thy lack of forbearance from one another, most assuredly new life shall spring forth, and may it then certainly be said, the flesh of two hath become one.

(pauses, raises up both hands)

And now shall God Almighty bless them, and say unto them, be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the good earth and subdue it. Have ye dominion o'er the fish of the sea, o'er the fowl of the air, and o'er every living thing that moveth upon the earth. In our own day the addition must be made for us to carry the message of goodliness unto the Godless and the heathen, that the will of God might be enduring and everlasting in his blessing.

The marching Bride is played by the pipe-organ as the couple exits. They both pass underneath raised arms and enjoined hands of the congregation. Oats are tossed as they make their way out the door. They both walk arm in arm toward the ceremonial building behind the main cathedral.

Enter Sir Frances Drake, George Dier, John White

Sir Frances Drake: *(as the couple walks by)* The ceremony was beautiful! May the blessings be as well.

George Dier: *(as the couple walks by)* See ye back in the yard later. *(exits)*

John White: *(as the couple walks by)* My Boy, ye 've done well for thyself! Cheers!

Tomasyn Cooper White: *(as the couple walks by)* Hang on to her tightly, boy, care for her well!

At the door of ceremonial building

John Burges White: I see ye 've finally gone and done it. It took so long, did it not?

Ananias Dare: A working man is always busy at work, my dear brother.

John Burges White: Awe, but ye had time to play on at least one day. I mean, behold what ye managed to catch!

Ananias Dare: I must agree, (*smiles*) certainly she was the best for me.

John Burges White: One cannot deny how much we all love ye both. Observe the four lavish honey pie cakes, the walls trimmed in elegant tulips and daisies, not to mention the literal beds of splendid carnations and blood red roses covering walls, door frames, tables, and the like. Would we not go to such trouble on ye behalf, my dearest fellow, if indeed it were not so?

Ananias Dare: (*smiles*) And the wine, man, let us not forget, cheers! (*hoists a full goblet*)

Eleanor Dare: At this point, that's what I have to say about it. Cheers to all and to all a fine night!

John Burges White: (*holds the goblet in his right hand high, smiles*) Examine the five fine suited dandies entering the room, will ye? I suppose there's soon time for an orchestra performance, and a bit of dance, eh?

Eleanor Dare: (*nods her head, smiles*) I have no doubt where they were selected from amongst the best.

Ananias Dare: (*smiles*) Me thinks I'm in the mood for some dance, eh?

Eleanor Dare: *(smiles)* Toss me in with ye. The alluring rhythm moves me right!

Ananias Dare: So tell us brother John, where-be thy-catch for the day, and might I say, the forthcoming night?

John Berges White: *(hoists his right hand goblet, smiles)* Maybe round the corner and beyond the crowd yonder, eh? Wouldst thou think not?
(laughs)

Elenaor, Annias, John, George Dier, and others enter the dance floor. Male and female pair up as the ballroom music spins.

Isobel Richard Frobisher: This fine music and good step shall be enough to set the blood to spin. What thinks ye?

Eleanor Dare: I must tiptoe, I presume, *(laughing)* careful, not to spend myself up in too many elegant whirls.

Isobel Richard Frobisher: *(chuckles)* What's the treat afterwards?

Eleanor Dare: I'm not clear since Annanias loves surprises. He mentioned securing permission and hiring a buggy to spend the evening in and about the heath at Hampstead.

Isobel Richard Frobisher: *(smiles)* The heath is certainly at its best around this time O' the year.

Eleanor Dare: And it truly is such a pretty day! Think it so, dear Isobel?

Isobel Richard Frobisher: *(smiles, chuckles)* Aye deary, and pretty days lend into better nights, so it has long been said.

Eleanor Dare: By the mistletoe it certainly shall be.

Isobel Richard Frobisher: (*dancing, gazing around*) Aye, (*smiles*) the arches o'er my head and the doorposts clothed in such, shall certainly see to it. (*smiles, lifts crystal filled with wine to her mouth, nods*) And the evening quarters?

Eleanor Dare: Maybe a new place soon to be named The Spaniard's Inn. Some friend of Ananias told him all about it.

Isobel Richard Frobisher: (*smiling*) If such be not to your liking there's always The Golden Cross.

Eleanor Dare: (*smiling, shrugs*) The nest at the moment, doesn't exactly dominate my mind.

Isobel Richard Frobisher: No doubt, like the hungry lioness in Daniel Dogood's dismal den, the grandest slice of meat Most certainly does. (*pauses, smiles, cheers*) Well the music has stopped suddenly. It must be time for the Loca-Hora.

The men exit momentarily

Lights darken

The rear gathering room

Martin Frobisher: Annanias, I'm glad you didn't ignore our age old wedding custom of meeting with the groom before the grand finale'.

Ananias Dare: I've shook the hands today of those I haven't laid eyes on in fifteen Years.

John White: How goes the tile and brick laying business?

Ananias Dare: (*nods his head*) It's building up. I hired four Irish brick masons not long ago. We held at least that many raw contracts.

John White: I notice a potential for expansion.

Ananias Dare: I wish it was quicker from idea, to negotiation, to profit. (*sighs*) Seems like eternity before I reach a climax. When it finally does occur, I 'm not always content with it. I have the sensation that twice to three times the labor exits out, than the return on my efforts I-receive.

John White: I share your conviction, Ananias. Martin may be on the way toward alleviating these concerns for both of us.

Ananias Dare: (*smiles, gasps, nods*) Aye, I've heard, round and about, concerning the adventures of Frobisher.

John White: Look, the good queen has recently named our foreign lands Meta Incognita. Her faith in our territorial potential is unwavering, to say the least. She resolved to send out the largest expedition yet, with all accommodations necessary for establishing a colony of one hundred skilled and capable men. She has presented the golden chain of exhalation 'round the neck of none other than Martin Frobosher himself.

Ananias Dare: Was this the first time he gained the good queen's favor?

John White: One of many, but I can see ye are not grasping the true significance of this embrace, my lad. This signal from the good queen launched fifteen vessels. There were over four hundred men aboard these ships. These men consisted of one hundred forty seven miners, four blacksmiths, and five assayers.

Ananias Dare: What's the significance in this venture? What value derives from it?

John White: A portion of the tract was explored. Natives in the place were encountered. Records of the land and the people were made, including watercolor drawings. And a grand portion of ore was extracted, then transported back to port herein.

Ananias Dare: What became of the colony? Was gold discovered?

John White: Aw, some gold, (*shrugs*) though very little. The colonial effort failed to secure.

Ananias Dare: So what's on the limb now?

John White: Martin has met recently with Walter Raleigh. Raleigh knows of a charter being conceived by the good queen and her parliament, to explore the new lands of a land tract she has named Virginia. Do ye realize the significance in this, son?

Ananias Dare: (*sighs*) This sounds interesting, but what of it?

John White: If this charter is born, and it will be, Raleigh has already made his bid to secure it. He needs an exploratory commission. I have agreed to assist him in that venture.

Ananias Dare: In what way?

John White: I 'm the record keeper. I record the accounts in pictures. Look, as I am doing so now at this wedding. (*points toward a tripod with a canvas*) I will engage in scientific analysis of elemental minerals and whate'er yet to be known accouterments might be overturned.

Ananias Dare: (*sighs, shrugs*) But the gambles of Frobisher have yet to net true wealth or even honest success, for that matter.

John White: There's more. Frobisher has met with Francis Drake. The French and the Spanish are up to no good. Have ye heard of the Spanish

discoveries and adventures in the Americas?

Ananias Dare: *(sighs)* I have little time for pondering or investigating. I am a working man, Senior White.

John White: Tons of gold in untold ship loads are emerging from the southern sectors of these Spanish land claims. The Spanish call their northern territory La Florida. The capitol of La Florida is a fortress settlement Known as Santa Elena. Gold laden Spanish ships move back and forth from the most southern portion of Spanish Territory to Santa Elena! Drake and Frobisher are keen on this understanding.

Ananias Dare: It all might as well be wealth on the moon, at this point.

John White: Once this charter is born, the back door plan betwixt Raleigh, Drake, Frobisher, and myself, is to secure a fortress settlement of our own slightly northward of Santa Elena. We'll need craftsmen, skilled service providers, and working men like thyself. We'll net the colony's wealth by raiding the Spanish gold ships from Santa Elena southward, since we are now at war with them. I'll possess a very high position of authority in this new colony. We could place extra portions of this gold up for a purpose of lending it out at interest, and taking land, gold, and gems as collateral on the loans.

Ananias Dare: *(sighs, drops his head)* It's sure slow going like I am. Things are OK, but not like I wish they were.

John White: I agree with Frobisher and Drake. It all boils down to chance or neverending lifelong toil. Are ye in with us when the time arrives?

Ananias Dare: *(sighs, drops his head)* Allow us to see what time bears forth. We'll take it from there.

Stage lights dim

Ananias Dare, John White, Martin Frobisher, exit

Back in the main room

Patrons dressed as ghosts, goblins, walking on stilts, run to and fro through the gathering crowd. Music plays fast catchy tunes, glasses are filled with wine, masked women grab the men, everybody dances.

Ananias Dare: Make the best of our moment. Life is to be enjoyed today.

Eleanor Dare: I'll second that.

Francis Drake: Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

Isobel Frobisher: Our gain is now, on this moment!

Stage lights Dim. All performers exit

Scene 2

*Blackwall Harbor
Walter Raleigh's House*

Seated in the din by the hearth side

April first 1584

Enter Martin Frobisher, Walter Raleigh

Martin Frobisher: (*smiling, politely nods*) Inform our company of the latest news, good sir.

Walter Raleigh: I was awarded a charter for exploration by none other than the Queen herself on March 25th. (*bows, smiles*) I am a happy man! When the doors of possibility open, certainly no limitations exist on one's opportunities for success..

Ananias Dare: (*lifts his wine glass, bows politely*) What do we presently know In regard to this place unto where the company might venture out into?

Martin Frobisher: (*smiles*) I can inform all, the land area where the company is headed is not nearly as virgin as one might assume. Sailors have long paused periodically along those same shores. I personally have heard tales of huge villages and towns. Natives have been reported to wear pearl, ruby, emerald necklaces and bracelets. Some welcome visitors, whilst others prefer to be left alone.

John White: (*tips his chalice*) No doubt, these tales are all fact, for I have heard many of the same. (*pauses*) There 're more positive possibilities where the company dares to venture, however. There is an herb the natives call *winauk*. It's a sweet scented herb, good for making spring tea, bearing innumerable medicinal qualities. Several years back the Spanish introduced this herb and its benefits to English shores indirectly. It was readily received by the English, but at exorbitant prices, nonetheless. There lies a potential fortune waiting to be harvested in this fact alone, when we possess inexhaustible resources of it, for us to trade at prices the common lot of citizenry may easily access.

Walter Raleigh: (*raises eyebrows, pauses*) Sounds very plausible. I readily recall the time, the herb, and its head spinning prices.

Martin Frobisher: There are more possibilities here at stake. Sailors tell me of an herb smoked in a pipe the natives call a Calabash. This herb lifts one's spirits from the gloom, gives great strength when one's body ebbs low, clears the mind and the lungs for much better daily function.

The Spanish second these reports. They go on to say where some natives process the leaves in dry golden form, sweeten them with honey, then roll them, placing the roll beneath their lower lips, granting them the same positive benefits without all the smoke. They allow their mouths to fill up with the juice therefrom, never swallowing, only spitting the black juice occasionally to empty their mouths.

Walter Raleigh: I want to make a proposal, White. We're getting materials and people together. I'm thinking our colony will be a military venture initially. We need record keepers and assistants of experience and character. I'm offering a complete share in whate'er total we manage to wrest from the land or the Spanish. My eventual plan is to elevate our person into a position of chief status as time goes on.

John White: I'm all in. What's the overall plan?

Walter Raleigh: Ye shall be right hand assistant to Sir Richard Grenville, primarily as an artist-illustrator. Ye shall labor side by side with Thomas Harriot, who is a chief mathematician and scientist. Ye twain shall create maps of the area, whilst Thomas Harriot investigates and explores in search of products bearing potential value at harvest. Everything we do, observe, and find must be categorized as it is organized. This job I assign unto ye is of utmost importance, White, and an unavoidable necessity if the company is to be successful in our overall venture.

Ananias Dare: What be the accompanying specifics concerning the colony itself?

Walter Raleigh: I'm still in-waiting. We're exploring the chartered territory first before we even contemplate settlement. Based on our discoveries and future revelations we may then appropriately plan a colony with a likelihood of surviving.

Ananias Dare: (*chuckles, eases back into his seat*) So tell us, Mr. Raleigh, how ye acquired this charter. Did the good Queen hand it to ye outright?

Walter Raleigh: My half-brother, Sir Humphery Gilbert was actually granted the charter outright back in '78. He was awarded this for assisting in crushing the rebellion of Munster province earlier during the '70s. Gilbert wasn't clear on the terms of the charter, yet he clearly understood them as granting him rights to the territory north of La Florida.

Ananias Dare: (*clears his throat*) Where did thy account enter into this picture?

Walter Raleigh: Did ye not hear of it?

Ananias Dare: This moment is my first account.

Walter Raleigh: Humphery Gilbert sailed to formally claim John Cabot's tract for the crown and colonize it. On the way back, he vanished at sea in '83, ne'er to be heard from again. So the charter was divided recently between Adrian Gilbert, and myself. Adrian received access to the lands of John Cabot, and those to the north, and mine were those south, north of La Florida.

Ananias Dare: I'm sad for thy brother, but the good found in his misfortune is certainly to thy sweet award. (*smiles, chuckles*) Certainly his wishes for any future adventure would have been no less than what hath occurred. Bravo!

Walter Raleigh: (*clears throat, strains his words*) Nothing comes without stipulations, mind thy manner. .

Martin Frobisher: (*smiles, chuckles slightly*) My interest here has most surely perked.

Walter Raleigh: I have until '91 to firmly establish a colony, else I lose my charter. Time is of an essence here, lest we all lose the opportunity to make a grand strike. We must extract all detail specifics first, then develop a solid plan of approach. The exact details specified are to discover, search, find out, and review such remote heathen and barbarous lands, counties and territories. We are in possession of granted permission to establish a base from which to send privateers on raids against Spanish treasure fleets. Of this land we are also commanded to have, hold, occupy, and Enjoy.

John White: Men, sounds like we all need to make the best of it! (*smiles broadly, hoists his chalice high*)

Martin Frobisher: I'm certainly in. (*hoists his chalice*) What about the rest of our company?

Walter Raleigh: I've already met with Philip Amadas, Simon Fernando, and Author Barlow. Amadas and Barlow are my two ship commanders, while Fernando will be assigned as pilot. John, there stands a place on board for ye and Harriot twain. We'll most definitely need a scientist for research, and a record keeper. A skilled artist is in high demand.

John White: I'm in. I must behold all of this adventure for myself.

Ananias Dare: I myself, am going to wait and see. Inform me of the detail specifics upon thy return. Gentlemen, I have a new wife to feed and care for. I can't take any chances where potential for return can't be

secured, nor one where my wife can't accompany me.

Lights Dim

Ananias Dare, John White, Martin Frobisher, Sir Walter Raleigh exit

Scene 3

Plymouth, England

April 26, 1584

Two ships are docked and being loaded

While out walking on the dock...

Enter Ananias Dare, Philip Amadas

Ananias Dare: I know today must be thy happy day, sir!

Philip Amadas: (*smiling, breathing deeply*) Certainly it is. That winning sensation hangs thickly in the air this morning.

Ananias Dare: At least ye 'rt surrounded by fine company.

Philip Amadas: Mighty fine, (*broadly smiling*) I should add to that.

Author Barlow: Beg thy pardon, good sir, (*smiles*) I shall say the best!

Ananias Dare: Should ye encounter Spanish villains along the way, then what?

Author Barlow: We have our companion of their cloth among us, generally

speaking.

Ananias Dare: Not sure I have met him.

Philip Armadas: (*man passes by, grabs his arm*) Sure ye have! Allow me to introduce the one and only Simon Fernando.

Simon Fernando: (*smiles, bows*) My pleasure in this encounter, good sir. (*extends his right hand*).

Philip Armadas: (*nods toward Fernando, points toward Ananias Dare*) Behold John White's son-in-law.

Simon Fernando: Excellent, my pleasure in meeting with ye. Are ye part of our team, sir?

Ananias Dare: Not this go round. It's a wait and see game for me, but my interest is great. I'm in possession of a splendid new wife to care for.

Simon Fernando: Well, we've all had our spin at that wheel, young man. We understand. We're at a point where things are on autopilot, but I wouldn't expect ye to comprehend my words.

Ananias Dare: My father-in-law shall give me the scoop on everything. I most definitely want to be a part of this down and dirty colonial venture, to be sure, when we know the winning odds turn in our direction on the wheel of fortune, good sir..

Simon Fernando: What be thy craft?

Ananias Dare: Tiler and brick crafter. Sometimes a mason.

Simon Fernando: Most definitely a high need area, without a doubt. Art ye employed, or a man of good fortune's endeavor?

Ananias Dare: I have contracts ahead of my labor, and six masons employed. My tilery operates by its own accord. 'Tis all a small operation, but It's up and running.

Philip Amadas: So why the thoughts of exiting out on a venture into the mysterious unknown?

Ananias Dare: (*hangs his head, sighs, picks his head back up*) It goes so slowly, and then these taxes knocking me down thirty percent or more. I fraud when I can, but any risk over twelve percent is too great, and not enough to truly make a hardline difference. I desire being where I don't have the extra weight on my back holding me down. Why can't we Englishmen obtain the freedom to invest in wealth producing property, 'N ascend the ladder of wealth into a level of prosperity on par with aristocracy? All of us deserve it, if one should ask me.

Philip Amadas: I agree with such analysis. All of us here are in with this, from our own perspective, of course. We've all dabbled in privateering. (*smiles*) I dare say it's the quickest method for any true born Englishman to achieve financial excellence in his life. I had rather risk life and limb on the chance, than merely exist as a slave underneath some corporate or magisterial bootheel.

Simon Fernando: Not to mention the adventure to be had, no matter what the outcome.

John White: (*passes by carrying bags on board, pauses*) Hmm, I see ye 're meeting with the crew, eh?

Ananias Dare: How now? What's on the shake to transpire?

John White: It's a big venture. We're filling these two ships docked here now with food and some fifty men. It's exploratory for now. (*smiles, nods*) Ye hang on, if such is thy que. If all is a positive for moving forward, we

shall and very soon. We 'll definitely be needing good men of thy skill and scope.

Ananias Dare: When are ye pulling out?

John White: Tomorrow morning at first sun break. We shall all bunk out on the ship overnight. When the sun breaks in the morning, these two ports shall be drawn and tightly sealed.

Ananias Dare: Well, the wife and myself shall anxiously await thy return, sir.

John White: Until then, my dear son. May God's speed always lead the way..

Ananias Dare: And may ye and thy company be in possession of the same, father.

*John White, Simon Fernando, Philip Amadas, exit up the dock and off the stage.
Lights dim.*

Scene 4

Morning. September 1584

Plymouth England

At the ship docking yard

Enter Ananias Dare, John White

Ananias Dare: *(smiling)* Seems like yesterday since ye exited out.

John White: *(stepping off the boarding plank)* 'Twas most definitely a new world

we visited.

Ananias Dare: (*excited*) What did ye find? I can't wait to hear of it!

John White: We had adventures galore, my dear son!

Ananias Dare: What kind of people were the citizens of Virginia? What were they like?

Thomas Harriet: (*stepping off the plank*) We figured thyself and others would be asking such questions, so we invited two to come along with us.

Ananias Dare: Are they laborers? What be their social rank?

Thomas Harriet: Kings, and nothing less. Their people are very hospitable.

Ananias Dare: Might they be Christian, good sir?

Thomas Harriet: Hardly, anything but. However, they and their own greeted us with kindness, I must say. They do, interestingly enough, possess a practice of religion resembling Christianity somewhat.

Philip Amadas: (*stepping back from the plank*) The two kings will exit the ship in a moment.

Ananias Dare: (*gazing toward the loading and unloading plank*) What are their people called? What be their homes and villages like?

Philip Amadas: Secotan, I believe was the name. Their cabins are made of poles stuck down into the earth, with their tops bent over and tied. Over these poles are thrown and secured reed or rush mats. Their hearths are holes dug with the soil banked around it. The diameter of these cabins might be fourteen feet or more. A village might consist of twenty or more of these cabins. Each cabin has a corn field and a vegetable garden. Around all of this is a defensive palisade.

Simon Fernando: Look quickly now. Here they come!

Wanchese: (*steps down the plank*) gazes about, speaks nothing.

Ananias Dare:(*waving*) Hello, what be thy name, sir? (*extends his right hand*)

Wanchese: (gazes, doesn't extend his hand, blank stare)

Thomas Harriet: (*focuses on Wanchese*) Kino, solo, nookum rookum?

Wanchese: (*smiles, chuckles. extends his right hand*) Grotum, been solo, pekote.

Thomas Harriet: He says a pleasure to meet you.

Ananias Dare: (*shakes the hand of Wanchese. Glances toward Harriet*) Thou hast trained in their language, I see.

Thomas Harriet: Not exactly, but I've been my own student. I've made headway in a short time period.

Author Barlowe: We made the rounds. We studied land and water. We cataloged resources.

Ananias Dare: What was the weather like?

Author Barlowe: Balmy, to say the least. The good news is that many flowers were in bloom all across the land. Nay, I should say, many fruits were in the making. Sturgeon were abundant in the waters. Oysters may simply be pulled up from the water and roasted in flames immediately, then eaten in the shell. Terrapins were large and slow moving, easy to catch. Natives simply turn them over in the edge of the coals on their hearthsides, allowing them to cook in the shell itself. I observed an abundance of handfoods throughout the area in general. These details alone render the area

fine for establishing a colony, far as I am concerned. Ole Raleigh should be quite content!

John White: Well my fine fellows. Shall we all head on to Lunnon town? We're cordially invited to Walter Raleigh's home for a meeting and a much more detailed discussion of discoveries and future colonies in a few days, if not a fortnight. All of us have time to ponder our circumstances and future prospects. Let us all take our leave.

Simon Fernando: I believe that may be my best advice all day.

Stage lights dim

Durham House

London England

In the garden area rear of the house

Evening, September 1584

Arthur Barlow: (*Seated by the garden hearth*) It's a splendid evening. We'll soon be witness to a fine sunset.

Walter Raleigh: Aye my saucy mates, such a splendid setting for discussing personal business.

Simon Fernando: Any plans developed here on this eve' must soon be supported by decisive action.

John White: Oh, why certainly that 's the plan! (*tips back a bronze chalice filled with brandy*)

Ananias Dare: The discoveries and the formulated plan is what I enjoy best on this Occasion. Surely a man can't carry his dear wife out on a half-baked venture.

Thomas Harriot: (*pours a healthy shot of Irish Whiskey*) I should say the experience in general was far beyond one's common adventure.

John White: A month at sea, two months around in a strange land, a month to return. Certainly enough to make for some pleasant conversation at the least.

Ananias Dare: I wish there was a window through which I could see into this land
Ye company experienced.

John White: (*steps into the din. Steps back outside with large papers in hand*) Take a look. Here is the village referred to as Secotan. Observe the organization. These are the cabins (*pointing*). This is the ceremonial bonfire gathering area. These poles with the strange faces carved into them are in the dancing area. Here, during times of ceremony, these people will gather and dance sometimes for several days and nights on end.

Walter Raleigh: (*receives a glass of whiskey*) How do they continue on in such a manner? The report seems beyond human abilities.

John White: They consume copious amounts of a black drink they call cassina. This drink allows them to accomplish such feats. It's found in the leaves of a certain type of holly all along the coastal areas. During times when they are not festive, usually in the morning, they drink only two to three cups a day of this drink, but take it every day I must say.

Walter Raleigh: Is there value to the English in this liquor?

John White: The Spanish take it with a relish, often hanging, drying, and grinding the leaves, only then to mix it with coffee gathered in Morocco. When they can't access this mixture, they wail, whining the world will soon come to an end.

Walter Raleigh: If our market isn't in this herb, then surely it should be for the African coffee! (*tosses back a hearty shot*).

Ananias Dare: Was there more for potential exploitation?

Philip Armadas: There were fine tasting pulses, of varieties I've ne'er encountered. There were melons and interesting orange and yellow plants shaped in appearance to those African gourds we witnessed a few years ago. There was also a type of grain that grows on six feet tall stalks in ears a foot long. No other crop anywhere produces more than this, on the variety of soil. It can be ground into gruel, made into flour and bread, or baked and eaten in that form. All of these could and should be exported out for markets here in England and abroad beyond.

Martin Frobisher: Not to mention this herb the natives put into what they call a calabash and smoke, when they are not chewing it, or sniffing it up into their noses. I think one of our men has some now.

Manteo: (*seated in a chair by the outdoor table. Pulls a pipe from a leather pouch, loads it with tobacco and begins smoking it.*)

Martin Frobisher: The Arabs do a similar feat with opium. I wonder if the sensation in that herb is the same.

John White: Well let us see, and I'll be first to try. He doesn't appear incapacitated as one does on opium.

Thomas Harritet: (*turns toward Manteo*) Ting tang moolah munday.

Manteo: (*hands over the smoking pipe, smiles*) Mooka mooka nooka doo!

John White: (*receives the smoking pipe from Thomas Harriat*) Everything lies in the attempt. (*raises the pipe to his lips, puffs*) Not that bad, I must say. It bites a bit in its own way, but not that bad. I can feel the lift I get.

(hands the pipe over Philip Amadas)

Philip Amadas: *(takes a smoke, then tips his whiskey glass)* It goes great with my favorite shot of whiskey here. This herb appears to put more zip into my drink. *(hands the pipe over toward Ananias Dare)*

Ananias Dare: Another person may have my share of that. I must say, while this conversation is informative, and the Virginians appear benevolent and welcoming, what's the plan?

Walter Raleigh: This is the plan. First I need funding to outfit our party. The show I'm intending to make with these native kings and the report I write up on our findings should fetch enough of that. Word has already reached the ears of our dear Queen, and I've been informed of the smile on her face.

Ovation, cheers from the others

I figure when the ever anxious investors hear of the bounty this land holds, us receiving the funding shall be a given. The colony is largely going to be a military colony in the initiative. The military experience in leadership includes one of being chief Royal Household Officer in service to the crown. He'll be governor of this colony, and should fare well in possession of the title. My intended number of men to board with us on this journey is only sixty nine, but if we could fetch six hundred it would be much better for us in our colonial efforts.

Ananias Dare: What shall be the primary focus of the colony?

Walter Raleigh: For deeper exploratory missions where we shall further evaluate the natural resources in the area. As the colony establishes itself, we can also annotate and evaluate the techniques employed to stabilize the colony, against our discoveries.

Ananias Dare: (*Pours another glass of whiskey, holds it high*) Sounds like a mission destined for success!

All present pour themselves a glass of whiskey, holding them high

In unison: To a fine life and sweet success! Everything in the venture we shall invest, cheering, triumphing, from east to west. Surely the sweet goddess, Fortuna, stands with us! We shall dominate in every situational test.

Stage lights dim.

Philip Armadas, Ananias Dare, John White, Martin Frobisher, Sir Walter Raleigh, Thomas Harris, Manteo, Author Barlowe, Simon Fernando, exit

Scene 5

January 6th, 1585

Windsor Castle, room 520

The royal guards stand on either side of the door. The sword bearer and Queen Elizabeth stand before the knighting stool. A royal guard stands on either side of the door opposite.

Trumpets sound. The door opposite opens. A double armed guard slowly escorts Walter Raleigh forward who dons a robe of perfect white, with a golden inlaid collar, coming to pause before the sacred stool of honor.

Enter Queen Elizabeth, Walter Raleigh

Queen Elizabeth: We, honorable masters of a timeless royal diadem, ardently embrace loyal accomplished servants demonstrative of stainless honor and enduring chivalry, while maintaining long standing palace traditions.

Walter Raleigh: Oh dear Queen, I pledge my continuing loyalty in both sickness and in health, to honor, tradition, the crown, and myself as thy personal servant, until death should separate me from my sworn responsibility.

Queen Elizabeth: (*inflexible appearance*) Was the purge of disinclination o'er all crown holdings and concerns completed to meet or exceed magisterial expectations?

The sword bearer: (*rigid in appearance and speech*) That it was, my fair lady.

Queen Elizabeth: Were any oaths sworn or long anticipated vows left unsung?

The sword bearer: None, my fair lady.

Queen Elizabeth: Very well. When was the final moment of completion?

The sword bearer: At sunrise, my fair lady.

Queen Elizabeth: (*nods slightly but noticeably toward the congregation*) Very well ye debonair gentlemen and elegant ladies, the moment for commencement is now.

The sword bearer exits. The sword bearer returns with the knight's armor in hand, laying it out a few feet from the kneeling stool, then returns into former position.

Queen Elizabeth: (*facing Raleigh*) What vows do ye maintain to uphold, sir?

Walter Raleigh: First and foremost, to always defend a lady. To always speak

the truth. I vow to always remain loyal to my lord. With that I vow to remain loyal to the church of England. I will always be charitable, giving defense to the poor and helpless. I shall remain brave in thy service, my dear Queen. When out on a venture I shall ne'er remove my armor except when bathing or sleeping, with my sword always by my side. Fear shall ne'er sway me to forbear dark and dangerous roads whilst in thy service, my dear Queen. I shall always and forever more be on time for engagement of arms, battle, or tournament. Upon my return home from an adventure, my dear Queen, I shall always give due account to thy honor and whome'er it may concern. I shall battle only one on one with my opponent. If taken prisoner, I shall forswear arms and horse unto my opponent, and never take up arms again against my opponent without his consent.

Walter Raleigh kneels upon the cherished stool

Queen Elizabeth: Do ye vow always to be virtuous thyself? Ye cannot give what ye are not in possession of. Do ye comprehend that ye are in far worse shape than the plants, since they are possession of the virtue in giving of their very nature unto one another?

Walter Raleigh: By the living spirit within me, and the God of heaven above, my dear Queen.

Sword bearer hands the Queen the knights sword

Queen Elizabeth: (*raises the sword, tapping it flat upon Raleigh's left shoulder*) In the name of the church I, Queen of the English realm, dub thee qualified. (*raises the sword over Raleigh's head, tapping it flat upon his right shoulder*) In the name of the throne I dub thee qualified and hereby sustained. (*raises the sword above Raleigh's head, tapping it flat*) Henceforth on this day, in the name of God Almighty, I Queen Elizabeth the first, now dub thee knight in

service to God Almighty and country! Arise now, as ye may.

Raleigh stands at attention

Queen Elizabeth: In lieu of thy success in our colonial efforts, and in the name of ushering in the word of God to heathen races and individual people, thou art bestowed with all rights and privileges conferred by the title ye hath so earned. On this day the title of the charter ye have so acquired shall be that of Virginia. I hereby appoint ye as governor, knight lord, and sole counselor in this realm and province. Henceforth ye shall be known as Sir Walter Raleigh, with all accommodations, earnings, titles, and responsibilities here conferred unto ye, and ye alone. Are there any questions in regard, Sir Walter Raleigh?

Sir Walter Raleigh: None, my dear Queen.

Queen Elizabeth: (*gazes without*) Any comments in finalization?

Gathering without: *silence*.

Sir Walter Raleigh: None, my dear Queen. May God Almighty hold the Queen and merry England next to his heart for all time forward.

Gathering without: *applause, gradual silence*

Queen Elizabeth: May the sun forever rise and set on this realm upon whose helm where we all now pause in humble reflection. May his gracious donations of health, wealth, and gifts of accomplishment endure the trials of centuries into a distant millennium. May our imperial realm shine as a lamp unto the nations of earth, becoming an eager escort into secular order and elegance, a grantor of wisdom, a true beacon for the glamor of heaven beyond. May our throne stand as a trumpet for the victorious, always and forever more.

Lights gradually dim

*Sir Walter Raleigh, Queen Elizabeth, The guards, The Sword Bearer,
gathered witnesses, exit*

Scene 6

*The Port in Plymouth England
April 9, 1585*

Men and supplies are on the dock, walking up and down the boarding plank. Seven ships are docked in waiting.

Enter Ananias Dare, Philip Armadas

Ananias Dare: *(smiling, glancing toward the rising sun)* Surely today is a happy day. Let us relish and excel in its arrival! Allow the arms of unfettered liberty to open wide and embrace our souls, whilst the arrogance and antagonism of enduring bondage weeps and gnashes its teeth at our passing.

Philip Armadas: No reason why all should not stand in perfect order. Every detail has smoothly moved into its proper position. I must say, that point alone sets this venture high above all others.

Ananias Dare: (*turns toward Sir Walter Raleigh*) Thy grand accomplishment of Achieving knighthood certainly has made all the positive difference.

Sir Walter Raleigh: Our two companions from Virginia here have made all the positive difference. (*points toward them both, smiles.*)

Sir Richard Grenvile: Ah, the dear Queen was most certainly convinced of our positive intentions. (*smiles, chuckles*) Let there be no doubt where merry England surely stands paramount in all our thoughts.

John white: (*chuckles, smiles*) Aye, good sir! Ne'er mind the heavy laden Spanish Galleons drifting past our point of defensive prospects.

Joachim Gans: I should say there Raleigh, did thy intentions in man power and needed supplies push through?

Sir Walter Raleigh: Well, sir, behold the seven ships dedicated to our cause. That mark alone denotes its own air of satisfaction. Our professional alliance and our body of six hundred men are an icing on the proverbial cake handed over to us and our company, courtesy of no less than her-majesty incarnate.

Ananias Dare: Bless the holy virgin herself! Thy request for a splendid six hundred came through. Maybe I shouldn't have withheld my own investment into this venture.

John white: Patience dear boy. My daughter resides in thy care. Once this colony is firmly established, with thy talent and my connections, ye are bound to supersede any eager competition.

Philip Armadas: Who was appointed governor? Or should I even dare ask, considering the military nature of the colony?

Sir Walter Raleigh: The most capable after much consideration, is none other than Ralph Lane in the flesh.

John White: Why not Richard Grenville?

Sir Walter Raleigh: I fear his past extremity in dealing with contention.

John white: I don't understand, I'm afraid.

Sir Walter Raleigh: Skulls along both sides of one's buggy entrance to his primary abode, doesn't do much to court favors from the native populations.

John White: I'm afraid I still don't comprehend the concern.

Sir Walter Raleigh: These Virginians outnumber us overwhelmingly. We are all obliged by circumstance to court their favor. Any move in an opposing direction does absolutely nothing to accomplish that end. Grenville is rash and impulsive, yet very effective in what he does. So that reason alone is why I have invited him on this mission. He also is an outstanding navigator. So I made him commander in chief of our fleet, rather than military governor of our colonial venture.

Ananias Dare: Should we find ourselves in need of defense, however, playing a winning hand is always best. I can clearly observe where Grenville is most valuable being held in reserve. Methodology is unimportant, so long as it invites unconditional success.

Sir Walter Raleigh: Our primary goals are cooperation, not conquest. We wish for alliances o'er enemies. Our supreme desire is a totally cooperative brotherhood above antagonistic adversaries. Being in possession of this quality is detrimental to all of our successes. Any move beneath this goal I find hazardous to our forestated goals. This reality absolutely must be

understood.

Joachim Gans: Sir, I am standing here on the dockside observing the quantities of supplies in movement on board our seven anchored vessels. It demands reserves in money for supplies enough to accommodate the six hundred men alone, not to mention those of our own. I would surmise where one third the value as an extra was applied to the request as a bonus in case the colony were in need of such while we are away.

Sir Walter Raleigh: Aye, thy anticipated figures are most accurate.

Joachim Gans: I shudder when I anticipate thy promise for a return on these funds in interest.

Sir Walter Raleigh: Twelve percent is possible, let there be no doubt on anybody's part.

Thomas Harriet: Twelve percent, and no positive identification of reserves in gold? How preposterous and daring a proposal? Surely any misstep shall come at the price of one's head, as Dudley and Empson found so true.

Sir Walter Raleigh: The natives wear garlands of gold and gems, eh Joachim?

Thomas Harriet: The natives wear garlands of colorful stones assumed to be gold and gems such as ruby, pearl, and emerald. We made no positive verification as of yet. (*turns toward Manteo standing beside him*) Innee, wachee, pizanthium?

Manteo: (*faces Thomas Harriet*) Quantifakiam, blethal, bozoram.

Thomas Harriet: (*turns toward Joachim Gans*) Manteo tells me he knows of the yellowstone, but it is of no value to his people. The hammered

metal found inside caves is of much more value to himself and his people.

Joachim Gans: We assume the intention in this description is to mean copper.

Thomas Harriet: Exactly. Copper does not bear much possibility for extracting payment in return for the investment in this venture, plus twelve percent in interest.

Sir Walter Raleigh: Aye Gans, as Harriet so craftily alludes. The projected colony's proximity to La Florida and the Spanish Galleon traffic from the far south up, shall bear every possibility for a speedy return on all investments plus interest...

Martin Frobisher: And then our own projected profits bear no possibilities for limitation there after we quickly net our returns.

Sir Robert Grenville: Not to mention extra profits to be gained from product harvest made there in our new colonial realm, then traded in English markets.

Ananias Dare: And many more beyond.

Joachim Gans: Ah, this is all very well. I clearly observe our golden way. I'm much honored to be a part of this venture.

Sir Walter Raleigh: Trust me gentlemen, (*smiles*) surely henceforth from this day, there shall indeed be no regrets.

In unison: No regrets made in the opportunity, no hesitations in today. For the hand of logic shall direct our notions, whilst we ride the angel, Fortunado's, hallowed wave.

Stage lights dim

Last of the supplies load. Every person boards a ship. Ananias Dare exits the stage.

Scene 7

July 1586

The ship, Tiger, pulls into the port at Plymouth England

Enter Sir Richard Grenville

Sir Richard Grenville: *(walks down the boarding plank, pulling supply chests, smiling)* Oh what a bountiful day mates! What more a reason is needed to be joyful? All are alive and well, and in good health.

Ananias Dare: *(excited)* Tell me about the experience! Did ye find wealth? Was the venture profitable?

Sir Richard Grenville: Oh, yes indeed I found wealth. I found a stray from the gold laden Armada, The Santa Maria de San Vicente. Not only was enough golden doubloons, bar, and silver bars harvested from her to repay all of our investors plus their requested twelve percent, we also harvested the same amount to be divided among ourselves.

Ananias Dare: How much was harvested, dare I ask?

Sir Richard Grenville: Some fifty thousand ducats worth.

Thomas Harriet: That amount figures in at each man receiving 125 per individual, before we subtract the fees for investment. Our fees are rounded out at minus one third, Annanias. So our in-hand total amounts to 83 ducats per person. The in hand value amounts to 294.5 grams of gold per person or 12450 pounds sterling.

John White: This doesn't even account for the ivory, silver, gold, pearls, cochineal, ginger, sugar, and a liquor drink the Spanish call Caneya. This value in total amounts to another two thirds in the gold take. This goes into the chief management's pockets alone, meaning us to include Raleigh.

Ananias Dare: (*hangs head, sighs, picks head up*) Where was I at on this venture? I would need to work for some three years or more to have such a take in comparison.

John White: (*smiles, pats Ananias on the back*) Hang on, my good boy. All dues in good time. (*sighs*) There was struggle in the colony. This fact cannot be overlooked. Our Spanish take pleased the queen, now we must please ourselves in the next venture. Here in this gracious endeavor, we were most pleased, but the colony itself must find its proper place as well.

Sir Richard Grenville: When our fleet exited Plymouth, we headed southbound through the Bay of Biscay. A severe tempest off the coast of Portugal separated the Tiger from the fleet, and sank one of our small pinnaces. The plan was for the ships to meet up on the isle of San Juan Batista. The Tiger picked up a good clip, arriving on May 11, ahead of the other ships.

Here, on this isle, I proceeded to construct a base camp for the purpose of defending ourselves against Spanish forces. Ralph Lane's men assisted, with an intent among Lane and myself of educating these men for the colony beyond, soon to come. His men also forged nails and sawed lumber, for the purpose of constructing a new pinnacle. The Elizabeth arrived on May 19,

only eight days after the ship and the fort was constructed.

Ananias Dare: Nothing to do but labor, eh? What part of San Juan Batista were ye Located?

Sir Richard Grenville: Monsequetal, the south coastal sector.

Ananias Dare: What did the company encounter next?

Sir Richard Grenville: I contacted local Spanish authorities in hopes of securing supplies, yet my requests for assistance were ignored. Thus, I assumed the plan was to attack.

Ananias Dare: This is certainly one loaded adventure tale.

Sir Richard Grenville: The ships nor the supplies ne'er arrived. So I abandoned the fort in San Juan Batista. I captured two Spanish ships in the passage near San Juan Bautista, sailing on to La Isabella, where Spanish authorities successfully traded and engaged in profitable negotiation. On June 7 I exited La Isabella, sailing on to Wococon.

Ananias Dare: How did everything fare from that point on?

Sir Richard Grenville: We fell on hard times. On June 26 we struck a shoal, ruining our supplies and our victals. Our plans were to use the base we intended to build up as a privateering venture, but our ship, The Tiger, was nearly wrecked. Our remaining victals and supplies could not support a colony large as what we initially planned. Not only that, but the shallow waters kept anything at bay but the smallest of vessels. My own chief priority, along with Fernando and the others, was to locate another suitable colony.

Ananias Dare: The excitement in this adventure tale is difficult for me to contain.

John White: There is more at stake. The going was rough, but very much anticipated. Yet there were occurrences not anticipated, no matter how much discussion and intuitive deliberation preceded the events.

Sir Richard Grenville: After our repairs on the Tyger, we continued on with the others in our fleet to Port Ferdinando. Here we reunited with The *Roebuck* and *Dorothy*.

John White: Thankfully more than thirty men dropped off on the isle, Croatan, for the purpose of securing our efforts past, present, and future, were reunited with us.

Ananias Dare: I recall the return on July 5th, of John Arundell, bringing tidings of success in the colonial efforts to the Queen and her company.

Sir Richard Grenville: Our loss of supplies when the Tiger wrecked meant that we could not support the number of colonists we originally Intended. Rather than three hundred men, as was originally intended, only one hundred seven remained with Lane on our isle fortress. Another ship filled with supplies was scheduled to exit from Plymouth in June, bringing another round of colonists and more supplies.

Thomas Harriet: Thy father-in-law and myself were afforded ample time to visit the Secotan people in the towns known as Aquascogoc and Pamlico. Not only were we afforded time for extensive study and Documentation of food products, living habits, and customs in general, we also documented our extensive study of resources in general found throughout the area.

Ananias Dare: Anything of significance occur at these foreign towns?

Thomas Harriet: We exited from our boats in the inlet adjacent to the town. While we were there, these citizens in this village demonstrated little

motivation in welcoming us, strangely enough. While we were away, Grenville's personal silver drinking cup mysteriously vanished.

John White: I shutter to relay what the reaction was.

Ananias Dare: (*rolls eyes, glances about*) I shutter to ask.

Thomas Harriet: Grenville flew into an absolute rage. He orders his men to fire into gathering crowds of these people, slaughtering men and women, who no doubt were innocent. Then he torched the entire town, destroying food stores, homes, and many lives yet to be revealed.

Ananias Dare: I'm sure he courted the admiration of these people. Isn't such a reaction a detriment to our colony, and the crown's future endeavors There? I wonder how these 108 men survived the winter?

John White: From the generosity of the Virginians, we presume, or their own industriousness.

Thomas Harriet: Most are gentlemen in search of gold and gems. When none are found I seriously doubt they will be anxious to labor. Everywhere our people trod on that soil, I notice these foreign people sickened greatly, with large numbers literally dropping down and dying. These mysterious 108 more than likely perished with these citizen antagonists.

Sir Richard Grenville: Should we English remain for the long term, the land will be ours by sheer attrition, at the rate these people sicken and die. Let us maintain our focus on the bright end of the tunnel.

Lights Dim

Sir Richard Grenville, Thomas Harriet, John White, Ananias Dare exit the stage

Curtains fall

Act 2

Scene 1

Raleigh's Family estate and manor home in Devon

Seated around the hearthside in the din

Enter Sir Walter Raleigh

Sir Walter Raleigh: With the information at hand harvested and compiled inside the Virginia tract, we all can debate valid deductions, then deliberate another attempt at establishing the colony in the name of our honorable Queen.

Richard Hakluyt: From what I can deduce in my own diligent examination of these papers compiled by Harriet and White, Ralph Lane don't

need to be any sort of military commander, and Sir Richard Grenville certainly doesn't need to be any kind of colonial governor.

Ananias Dare: I'm certain as the sun is up in the sky above, that these citizens there will love us all to death when we return.

Thomas Harriet: Another approach would have been most beneficial, but we can't undo now what has been done.

Sir Walter Raleigh: Ye inform me that Grenville, my half-brother, flew into a murderous rage o'er a damn lost silver cup?

Thomas Harriet: That he did. We step out of boats on the inlet to enter the native village. The citizens there were not very inclined to meet with us. Maybe because of past abuses that none of us are even aware of. I am not certain if Lane and a few more didn't violate some of the young girls he found washing clothes in the secluded creeks and streams out from this village a day or two prior to our approach.

Ananias Dare: That certainly explains why these people didn't care to welcome thy party into their village.

Richard Hakluyt: The big problem here is this. These natives are the overwhelming majority all around in the place where we intend to land. They've been highly upset by the presence of our people. Should we return, and we most certainly need to, we have this situation to deal with. Grenville and Lane's foolish behavior is unacceptable. They bore no concern for the future of the good Queen's colony.

Ananias Dare: In what additional ways was the trust of these citizens violated?

John White: Grenville muttered repeatedly that the Virginians were miserable

wretches. They bear no fancy manner of dress. The men and women are not much more than bones, although the men tend to be strong, rather than sickly. They possess no sense of morals, with the females becoming active at the first signs of puberty. The men have no concern for morality. The greater the whore these females are, the more of value they are to them. Grenville was disgusted by the piecemeal lifestyle, customs, and general appearances these people possess. He seemed to feel himself highly above them. When his favorite drinking cup went missing, he went berserk.

Sir Walter Raleigh: Was that cup given to him as a gift for his actions against the Spanish, by the Chief Deputy of Arms in the palace guard, in the name of the Queen herself?

Thomas Harriet: That is the one. But there is more. Two chiefs, Manteo and Wanchese, made trips here. They both were brothers, if I am correct in saying so. Manteo maintained an alliance, even though these crimes were committed against his people. Wanchese felt otherwise, however. One could detect it in his general mannerisms and composure. Once we returned to Secotan, A chief named Pemisapen argued with Lane's men, eventually attacking a few. Some of Lane's men fired at him, striking him in the thigh. Pemisapen took off running into the surrounding woods. Lane's men pursued him, returning after a short spell with his head in their hands.

Richard Hakluyt: This act, I am certain, amounts to an act of war, far as these foreign citizens are concerned.

John White: Lane and his men took the head of this citizen lord, and impaled it upon a stake out in front of the fort Lane built on the isle there. Hundreds of citizens may have eased by in the dark of night to bear witnesses to this atrocity committed against them by our own.

Ananias Dare: It will be a hornet's nest the next colony will walk into.

Richard Hakluyt: For this reason I recommend dividing our unit up into two factions. One contingent shall explore along the seacoast, heading northward. The other contingent shall move farther up into the Chesapeake Sinus. Based on the analytical records of White and Harriet, the land is much better there for establishing a colony, the water less brackish, and the overall climate of the land more accommodating.

John White: (*easing backward, sighing*) Indeed, and food is more plentiful there.

Martin Froboisher: I agree on all of these considerations, yet one additional concern prevails here. How shall the colony support itself? I accompanied Drake. I've haunted the Chesapeake area in the exact location where our future colony will probably wind up establishing itself. It shall not be nearly as easy to make way out into the water toward La Florida for our proposed raids. Granville has already captured enough Spanish gold and loot to replace every invested dime, plus interest to our backers, and cap off a fine profit to our crew and ourselves. In this regard remaining in Secotan seems much more viable.

Sir Walter Raleigh: What Frobisher speaks is hard truth. Which shall it be, a better fed colony that survives, or one that maybe is forced to labor more for its daily bread but thrives to an illustrious amazement? This matter is a serious question to ponder.

Ananias Dare: Well here lies the solution, gentlemen. Frobisher, ye suggested two patrols, one by the seaside and another deeper into the inlet area already explored. Why don't we have two colonies? The one in Secotan will only be a temporary colony manned by a few. From this point profitable raids may be launched on the incoming Spanish galleons from La Florida, as they pass on their way to the New Found Land area. Our ships could also easily move in for attack south of the northern point at La Florida. The primary body of the

colony, the civilian garrison, shall move to settle deeper into the Chesapeake Sinus inlet so described.

Martin Frobisher: (*raises eyebrows, sighs, leans back in chair*) Well White this son-in-law of thine is on to something like a viable plan, eh? What be thy stake in our venture, boy? (*Pulls pipe from pouch, packs in tobacco, smokes*)

Ananias Dare: (*amazed at the smoke*) I plan to accompany this next venture out. My brick and tile business is moving along, but profit is slow here, with taxes and higher wages entrepreneurs must pay. In this new colony we all shall be master of our own craft, making our own decisions, retaining the fruits of our labors.

Sir Walter Raleigh: (*pulls cork in bottle, pours shots in glasses*) Fresh brandy toasts to our new quest ahead! The effort shall win, and our excellence shall glitter all the way back to merry England, blinding the eyes of Buckingham Palace. (*stares at the smoke*)

All lift the shot glasses high

Ananias Dare: The effort spent once, separates the wisemen from the dunce. The efforts spent twice hails the one thrice. The effort spent thrice shall find luxury and gold, making our lives so nice. For such a blessed endeavor we must all again roll the dice!

Stage lights Dim

Ananias Dare, Sir Walter Raleigh, Martin Frobisher, John White, Ananias Dare, Richard Hakulyt, exit the stage

Scene 2

Three months later
The Tavern in Devon

Enter Sir Walter Raleigh

Sir Walter Raleigh: Such pleasant days I must say. Largely speaking, all is going well. The good Queen has granted us another beseech. Five insurance companies have granted us a bountiful share. Three clothing co-ops have promised to drop some coin. We already have people signing pledges to participate in our colonial effort.

Martin Frobisher: (*fills his tumbler with brandy and wine, lights his pipe, eases back into his seat*) Well, which are they betting most on, the colonies prosperity, or success in our privateering efforts?

John White: Honestly, thus far privateering has been our only profitable venture.

Martin Frobisher: (*smiles, blows smoke*) Exactly. Privateering has been our only method of paying our financing costs. Nothing else has yet to bear fruit.

Ananias Dare: Ye love breathing in that smoke, eh?

John White: It's a citizen special all the way from Virginia. We've all dabbled. I am not wild about it. Lane and Thomas Harriet love inhaling this smoke.

Martin Frobisher: So how many colonists have signed the pledge, as of yet?

Sir Walter Raleigh: One hundred and fifteen, to include Ananias Dare and his wife Elenor.

Martin Frobisher: (*takes a long drink*) How do you feel about this, White? Virginia is a colony in the rough. Making everything work will demand a toughness yet to be witnessed in most.

John White: The choice is theirs in the end. The opportunity is now. We need good skilled people. We need wives for the men who know how to manage the homefront. We need builders, masons, and carpenters. Not to mention potters, coopers, and the like.

Martin Frobisher: Let us not forget distillers. We most definitely are in need of good distillers.

Sir Walter Raleigh: (*smiles, lifts his cup, places it on the table*) What does the wife think about all of this son?

Ananias Dare: She is well aware of life's difficulties in the colony. She tells me it's better to die than live in wonder.

Martin Frobisher: I second that! (*holds his cup high*) What ever became of Lane's Men left on the island?

Sir Walter Raleigh: According to Grenville, (*lifts his cup*) the natives on the isle who call themselves Croatoan, attacked shortly after he left for home. Manteo informed Harriet that these raw citizens slew most of the colonists. The colonists who survived were scattered out, dying from starvation in the woods. Some very few survived, but are yet to be heard from. Supplies were looted and all food stores destroyed by the Croatoan. Living will be tough for these few.

Martin Frobisher: When is this next round pulling out?

Sir Walter Raleigh: The plan is to pull out on May eighth of next year.

John White: What is the nature of the colony being planned?

Sir Walter Raleigh: This colony is not going to be military, although for defense some military forces will be present. Women and children are

included among these colonists. The two foreigners from Virginia, Manteo and Towaye, shall sail back with the colony.

Martin Frobisher: I'm with Drake hunting ships. My bet is that we shall be the one's who pay the colony's bills.

Sir Walter Raleigh: The plan shall be for the colony to divide, with one division haunting the beach area, probably the isle, and other moving farther inland toward the Sinus area. The Sinus area will be where the permanent colony shall be relocated into. The isle is only a small base fortress area, from which ships shall launch to attack the Spanish Galleons. The intent will be to establish a base for attacking Spanish ships and a permanent colony from which raw resources may be harvested and processed into tradable goods in European markets.

Ananias Dare: It's all or nothing this time around, Raleigh. Thy charter dies in '90. Too much money has already been wasted. The only salvation for the colony is that capturing the Spanish fleet was so profitable. The question is how long can it all last?

Lights Dim

Ananias Dare, Sir Walter Raleigh, Martin Frobisher, and John White exit

Scene 3

January 7 1587

Mary Ovary's Church

Enter Queen Elizabeth, Sir Walter Raleigh

Queen Elizabeth I : Raleigh, I have a draft for thy examination. I give this draft in lieu of a warning. Thy charter's time draws nigh. Three more years, or else. (*hands Raleigh a scroll neatly bound*)

Sir Walter Raleigh: (*takes the scroll, unrolls it, smiles*) So this new charter declares John White as the governor of the city of Raleigh. He is allowed twelve assistants, I see.

Queen Elizabeth: We must retain and secure small fragments of a larger pie. (*levels off toward Raleigh*) That pie is the territory of Virginia.

Sir Walter Raleigh: I understand, my fair Queen.. Securing one fragment at a time may be a much more valid approach.

Queen Elizabeth: Thy half-brother, Grenville, made a royal mess of everything, as I am to comprehend. What else am I to perceive that he would do, considering how much the Irish detest his very name? The English could have won the fray much easier, had the approach been more one of convincing than compelling.

Sir Walter Raleigh: The Irish rejected the crown's authority, my dear Queen. Properly applied force held them in line, compelling them to comprehend where their only options for success and life itself, are to submit.

Queen Elizabeth: Such maybe true, but ruthlessness only cultivates generational hatred. We must think beyond the present moment. This resentment shall pass down to the next generation, breeding new motivation to revolt. From the ruthlessness of Lane and Grenville, we must anticipate where the same is true in the new territory of Virginia.

Sir Walter Raleigh: For this reason, my dear Queen, this next colonial effort shall be family oriented, rather than military. For defensive purposes

we shall maintain a general guard. This colony shall be constituted of 115 people, to include my own daughter, Elenor, who is now with child, and her husband, Ananias. These hundred and fifteen are members of the yeomanry.

Queen Elizabeth: What gender are the colonists?

Sir Walter Raleigh: Out of the hundred and fifteen, seventeen are women and nine are children. Four of the women are with child. White's daughter makes five.

Queen Elizabeth: So from the eighty nine men, I should presume where five are married.

Sir Walter Raleigh: Ah, eleven in total, my fair Queen.

Queen Elizabeth: So Raleigh, if I am correct we have seventy eight men without access to available women?

Sir Walter Raleigh: Yes my dear Queen, with seventeen women, nine children, and eleven women being married, we have seventy eight single working age men.

Queen Elizabeth: What specifically are the age ranges?

Sir Walter Raleigh: Most are late teens to early twenties. Maybe twenty percent are above thirty.

Queen Elizabeth: I view seeds of strife soon sown between these colonists. The younger men will desire relocation. The older ones may be satisfied with the city of Raleigh. This discord sown from lack of female companionship, and the bad blood created with these citizens in the general area of Raleigh, shall compel these individuals to seek new ground, I anticipate. Better relations with the natives might be formulated in a new area, granting access to

women, better security, and an abundance of victuals scarce in the colony, among additional concerns. (*levels off at Raleigh*) These intuitive concerns are perceived, I must presume?

Sir Walter Raleigh: Yes, my dear Queen. The colony is encouraged to eventually divide and settle farther northward, and more into the interior. The city of Raleigh is only a base of operation facilitating our privateering efforts with La Florida. Between these two establishments success shall be virtually guaranteed.

Bishop in residence: (*enters sanctuary from rear quarters*) My dear Queen. (*hands an envelope*)

Queen Elizabeth: (*receives envelope*) Was the monthly portion appropriated this time?

Bishop in residence: (*swallows hard*) The promise lies on the wing, my dear Queen.

Queen Elizabeth: (*Levels off at the bishop*) So it goes on the third month now. (*opens envelope, raises her hard gaze*) Mr. Foxx, only a third of our requested rent is present. I am well aware of the endowment owned by many members of your congregation. A proper appeal should easily pull in our required monthly rents.

Bishop in residence: My dear Queen, the plagues and the wars in Scotland, Ireland, and other places bear a burden of tax on the citizens. My congregation is short on funds. Nevertheless, we shall make our monthly take for the rents due on this establishment. (*forces a smile*)

Queen Elizabeth: Prospects of examining the nearest workhouse interior should provide the proper motivation, I think. Prison yards will do what the latter fails to emphasize.

Bishop in residence: (*swallows hard*) Yes my dear Queen.

Queen Elizabeth: (*glares toward Sir Walter Raleigh*) Promises made to royalty, then not kept, amount to treason, pure and simple. I am aware of circumstance negating outcomes outside of one's control, but grants are made on honest evaluations of a citizen's appeal for favor. Are my words comprehended, Raleigh?

Sir Walter Raleigh: Yes, my dear Queen.

Queen Elizabeth: Very well. Allow the proceedings to commence upon our exit from these doors. Guards!

Guards step aside at the door. Other guards move on either side of the queen for an escort. Raleigh and Bishop in residence move out behind.

Lights dim

Queen Elizabeth, Sir Walter Raleigh, guards, Bishop in Residence exit the stage

Scene 5

Three ships dock at the port in Plymouth

Sunrise May 8th, 1587

Enter John White, Fernandez

John White: (*grimaces, squints, gazes abroad*) What a day for a ride out to sea.

Fernandez: Such a clear sunny day to guide us on our way.

John White: One ye know already so well, way out on the roll and swell.

Edward Spicer: So how could we ever go wrong? Do we have company awaiting our return?

John White: We can certainly hope for the best.

Edward Spicer: I've gathered bits and pieces from birds on the wind. When I stick them all together, the best I can deduce is a cheerful maybe in a pessimistic tone.

John White: The individuals left were never located on our following return. Reports from our Virginia allies claim they all perished. Some few escaped, but of their condition, we know not. I like to think they shall be around upon our return.

Edward Stafford: Well White, the riggs on my pinnace are all set, and the sails fully extended. A fine steady breeze exists. Once she is fully loaded and unhitched, we shall be on our way.

John White: We hold a precious cargo. Thank God for good able men such as Fernandez. The Lion carries not only a precious cargo from my point of view, but that of any future for the colony.

Ananias Dare: How many women aboard are with child, besides my own wife?

John White: Four, if memory serves me well, and maybe a possible fifth.

Ananias Dare: What a great beginning. What about women for the men remaining?

John White: Many are young, too young. We are in need of skillful work hands. We also need laborers. Affections shall arrive in due course of time.

Ananias Dare: I'll set to work on a brick foundry. I'll need bricks for my construction projects. Others will desire for them as well.

Edward Stafford: (*laughs under his breath*) Do mere yeomen possess golden coin?

John White: Manteo knows of a salt lick.

Ananias Dare: Salt is certainly esteemed.

Edward Stafford: More than gold?

John White: In the general situation, yes.

Ananias Dare: The privateers possess golden coin, ingots, and bars.

Edward Spicer: Ah, the next aristocratic dynasty!

Ananias Dare: Ones in possession of the most elegant homes, and largest tracts of Land.

John White: (*smiles*) It's all about being a world in the making.

Fernandez: A free world, I anticipate (*narrowing his eyes*) .

Edward Spicer: As we grow more liberated with the passage of time, I will Presume.

Ananias Dare: We must maintain peace with the citizens. Harm has been done. My heart feels rather anxious.

John White: Grenville and Lane are retired from this venture. I aim to patch up and sail forward.

Fernandez: Bullets strike hard, a sword slashes deep, and the head of a Secotan leader , along with many innocent bronze bodies, falls to the ground.

John White: And why not make the attempt?

Fernandez: Such crude actions followed the giving of gifts? What are outsiders to

think?

John White: We possess no other option, and Raleigh only has until '90, then this Virginia charter lies in his hands no more.

Ananias Dare: Then who shall be on guard for Virginia's colony?

John White: A more negligent set of pirates, we shall presume. Time shall reveal all secrets.

The three ships are loaded. The ships unhook from the moor and gradually move out to sea toward a setting sun.

John White, Edward Stafford, Edward Spicer, Fernandez, Ananias Dare exit.

Lights fade out.

Scene 6

July 22, 1587

The flagship and the pinnace drop anchor on Croatoan island

Sunrise on board ship. People are eating salt pork and hardtack biscuits, getting prepared to disembark.

Enter Quartermaster, John White

Quartermaster: (*hard glare*) Sir, did ye hear the disquieting news?

John White: What news? None has passed my way.

Quartermaster: Orders on paper from Simon Fernandez, are
for sailors to leave the colonists hereabouts on Croatoan.

John White: (*angers*) My orders to Simon Fernandez were for all of us to sail up
to Chesapeake, as we so agreed! I only wanted to pause on this island
for the purpose of visiting these men Lane abandoned.

Quartermaster: It has been said, sir, where Fernandez has ambitions for
establishing his personal plantation on Caprara near San Juan for
the manufacture and trade of sugar and making a much coveted
liquor the Spanish call El Caneya. He seemingly has taken his
looted gold and purchased tenable land for his proposed estate, sir.

John White: Why, the self-serving logic is criminal! He knows his orders, I say.

Quartermaster: He has agreed to remain in place for a finite period of time, sir, on
thy behalf and that of the colony. So it seems, Fernandez has a
specified time to meet with his land agent.

John White: (*gasps in anger, swears*) Are the rowboats and the folded cast nets
ready?

Quartermaster: Aye Aye, sir, on the spot.

John White: What about the individual day packs? We'll venture out upon the hill
yonder along the shoal.

Quartermaster: First batch is twelve out, sir. We have twelve packs made up
already.

John White: Well make twelve more for the next group. Today should be easy
pickings, seeing no sign of any stir on shore from here.

Quartermaster: We should have companions on the site already, if I understand the information correctly, sir.

John White: We always behave and prepare as if we don't, supply officer. Experience has taught me that much long ago.

Quartermaster: Who of authority is first out? I don't feel these colonists should go out alone.

John White: The chief infantryman, three grenadier, and a pikeman. Several among the average colonists are actually talented swordsmen. All should be under arms on the first boatload out, supply officer.

Quartermaster: As ye speak, so it is. (*turns toward the infantryman adjacent to him*) As the boat loads, prepare for the next boarding. There is much to do, and be aware of.

Ananias Dare: I'm following thyself and Fernandez.

John White: Doing so will be best. We have no room for missteps. Everything absolutely must go according to plan.

Eleanor Dare: (*glares hard*) Father, even I, a mere forthcoming mother and housewife, am aware of the curves life throws. It's great to have a plan, but a valid plan must always be flexible.

John White: Yes, most assuredly my dear daughter. Certainly people in possession of thy intuitive insight shall be of value to our colony, which is why I carried ye along.

Eleanor Dare: I desire for this move to go well. I want the best for the colony, ourselves, and the child growing inside my womb. I know Ananias desires great success. I do as well, but the chance ourselves and everybody else has taken in this venture, demands our security first and foremost. I dearly hope these other colonists abandoned onshore

have secured a viable premise for us to operate inside of. Otherwise this colony's future is up in the wind without loads of pressing labor in the initiative.

First rowboat is loaded with twelve. The rowboat paddles its way toward shore , then makes landfall on golden beach sand. The passengers exit. The chief pikeman rows the empty boat back out to the ship. The second group begins loading.

Ananias Dare: *(to the colonists boarding)* How many tradesmen in the group?

Five raise their hands

Ananias Dare: What art thou crafts?

Chief pikeman: The man nearest to me is a cooper. In front of him sits the blacksmith. Next in line sits the gunsmith. Out from him is the butcher. Last sits the carpenter.

Ananias Dare: All art needed dearly in the colony. Welcome to this new venture in honor of Sir Walter Raleigh and the virgin Queen.

The blacksmith: *(stands up in boat)* Sir, art ye at our helm?

Ananias Dare: I am the chief construction supervisor. Thou art in my company Service.

The blacksmith: Very well then. *(sits back down)*

The gunsmith: *(stands up in boat)* Good sir, is it true that we are now in a secular paradise?

Ananias Dare: It can be such if we make the determination.

The gunsmith: Very well then good sir! *(sits back down)*

The carpenter: (*stands up in boat, smiles, salutes*) Shall we all be welcomed ashore, with a fine banquet and fizzy ale drinks?

Ananias Dare: My father-in-law and I certainly pray for such a manifestation.

The carpenter: But sir, the town crier read the proclamation of such, complete with Raleigh and White's personal signatures. Such was endorsed via hard-stamp, from her majesty's very hand. The word was loudly proclaimed all throughout Lundun town, sir.

Ananias Dare: And so it was, and hence the potential lies in waiting. The future lies in our own hands, in the end. We possess the power to embrace this realm as heaven, or transform it into a hell of our design. In the end we choose. So on that note, sir, what be thine own choice?

The carpenter: Why, of course, I choose heaven o'er hell.

Ananias Dare: Very well then, thine own lot shall stand solid henceforth.

The carpenter: These words are much appreciated, sir. (*salutes and sits back down*)

The cooper: (*stands up in boat*) What manner of being are the citizens of this land? What mode of habit and living shall our neighbors be?

Ananias Dare: Sweet as honey should we motivate them to be such, or bitter as wormwood. Through them may our habits of life embrace the elements of the earth we shall soon stand on, or run contrary to it should we stand in adamant rejection of all we encounter. Soon our own labors shall be detailed. Maybe we shall find their realm more adaptable to our own designs herein. The future shall reveal all.

The cooper: (*sits back down*) Very well sir.

John White: (*walks up from rear of ship*) The last rowboat is pulling out. It's us now, the virgin green, and the wide blue sky.

Eleanor Dare: I, for one, couldn't be happier until we're actually settled in. The choice has already been made, all of the die cast, and now we're all obligated to live by the choices made. Allow time forward to remember us for remaining ever faithful to the honorable calling. Should this colony prosper and stick long standing, certainly another time shall ne'er again appear for us to live underneath likewise circumstances. May the best of time and effort forever prevail!

Stage lights dim

Eleanor Dare, Ananias Dare, John White, the Cooper, the Carpenter, the Gunsmith, the Blacksmith, Chief Pikeman, Quartermaster, John White exit

Curtains fall

Act 3

Scene 1

The last row-boat load lands on Croatoan Island

Enter John White

John White: The golden shine in this sand offers suggestions of magnificent prospects, (*steps over the edge onto the sand, picks up a handful, smiling*) Aye lass, here! Examine that. Wouldst thou not agree?

Eleanor Dare: I strain my sore eyes, but if ye say so, father.

Ananaia Dare: Eleanor is on to something, sir. I take it as it comes. When it materializes, then here it all shall be! The sand is good, the day is fine at this present moment, and we all are fed, clothed, healthy, pain free and well. (*glances over at John White, smiles*) All is as it is, sir. We have high hopes for a prosperous future.

John White: Well as governor, on that note we shall plant the cross, hail the king, tap the brandy keg, then let the entire colony stand here and toast to the rising sun and cheer hosannas to our future success!

Lieutenant Governor: Aye aye, sir, the cross is being struck and the keg is fetched from the ship-hold at this very moment.

John White: What thoughts have ye, Jubal, in regard to the colony and its prospects?

Lieutenant Governor: I feel like an iron box of gold already, sir!

Ananias Dare: Thou sire name be Dowlais. What more could anybody expect? What less? A Dowlais who is true to his name, leaps at an opportunity, no matter the odds!

Lieutenant Governor: Standing here alone certainly allows one to gratify any obligations of his name, if any there may be.

The Cooper: We must dig holes. With the tide coming in, when it retreats in the morning these holes shall be filled with fish and various creatures of the sea.

The Carpenter: A circle of stones is so much better!

John White: The conclusion is agreeable, but where be these stones? Maybe sticks

stuck down in the mud, but will these sticks stand against the surging water? I don't think so.

The Cooper: *(smiles, sighs sarcastically)* So it's back to digging four cubit by five cubit deep holes.

Eleanor Dare: Shant take long in the sand hereabouts.

The Cooper: *(smirks)* The fish are good for a woman with child, my lady.

Eleanor Dare: Five more here are in sore need, according to our records.

Group of men strike the cross in the sand. The brandy cask is rolled out and stood up. Another man carries a platter with the glasses. All except women with children gather around, pick up a glass, filling it at the tap on the base of the keg. They all stand, holding their shot glasses high.

John White: To the good Queen's long life!

All the colonists: Long live the good Queen!

John White: To the health of Britain and all of her merry men!

All the colonists: Long live Britain and her merry men!

John White: To the holy spirit, this bountiful land, and the sea winds!

All the colonists: Cheers to the holy spirit, this bountiful land, and the sea winds!

John White: *(gazes out into every face before him)* Now to the dreamers of this dream!

All the colonists: Hail to the dreamers of this dream!

John White: Cheers!, and allow this new odyssey to commence!

All the colonists: Cheers to all and allow this blessed odyssey to commence!

Everybody tips back their glass

stage lights dim

Three minutes pass, stage lights brighten

Colonists scatter on beach

Eleanor Dare: Father, where stands this fortress we've all heard so much about?

John White: *(pointing)* Yonder ways upon the hill, in the woods.

Ananias Dare: *(trudging up from the beach)* What do we have for food?

Fernandez: Ship biscuits with salt pork, and a bit of vinegar wine to wash it all down with.

Eleanor Dare: Was any fish inside those holes on the beach?

John White: A few. Manteo and the others were building fires in the sand over the dune yonder, and roasting them.

Ananias Dare: Ah !, with the ship biscuits and salt pork, it should go together well.

Eleanor Dare: The hearty mix shall carry us all through the day.

Fernandez: Eat cheerfully and dream of what we all deserve, being nothing less than fare fit for a king, eh?

John White: Such be the game plan.

Ananias Dare: So what exactly is the game plan here?

Lieutenant governor: To rediscover this fort we've been told of, then refit it and carry on.

Fernandez: (*faces White, smiles, motions*) Lead on dear master! The fires on the shore have prepared a gourmet meal, the guests have fattened, all grow anxious.

John White: (*walks out among the colonists with his lieutenant*) Gentlemen and fair ladies, follow me toward yon fortress. Manteo has returned, so the blacksmith informs, declaring the way forward into the woods to be unimpeded. Grab thy implements and accouterments, and allow us to be on our way.

The Carpenter: (*gazes around*) These woods are somewhat thick. What beasts Hereabouts abound?

Colonist, swordsman: Our men and arms are ready for whatever.

Fernandez: (*points*) Up ahead in the trees. Palisades I see!

John White: Affirmative, that it is. Only three hundred yards or so in from the water. Not too far away, yet far enough.

The colonists: (*excited*) Here we are. The wooden log gate to heaven, so the town crier proclaimed, pointing to the illustrations of this very place. Let us rush inside!

All race forward. The first few enter inside the snaggle palisade logs

Fernandez: But, where stands the house? Where stand the sheds? Where sits the couch? Where are the beds?

Ananias Dare: I must say, Mr. White, if this be the gate to heaven, I hate to witness

Any such a gate guarding the chasm of hell.

The colonists: What is this? Where are our homes? All we see is clutter on the ground behind these snaggled standing logs! What kind of scam might this be, White?

John White: Nobody promised anybody a bed of roses. We shall pitch tents. We all have fish from the beach, citron melons on board ship in the hold, with plenty of biscuits and salt pork to go with it. Come first light tomorrow we shall set to work a-building. So let us get down to it.

*The colonists get busy putting up tents and sail-cloth hooches inside the palisade.
The lights gradually dim. Every person on stage exits.*

Scene 2

Colonists are laboring, hewing logs, building, moving back and forth from the ship and the beach to the fortress.

Enter the carpenter, Eleanor Dare

The Carpenter: I do declare unseen eyes are watching us from a murky distance.

Eleanor Dare: My feelings are the same. None here are alone. Often I hear quiet footsteps just beyond the staggered palisade. We must fill in these great empty spaces in our palisade barrier.

The Carpenter: I can only wonder what kinds of motivations have preceded our presence in this place. Might they have been negative or positive?

Eleanor Dare: Sir Richard Grenville was the leader here in the colony before us. I know his past, and I am anxious in regard to what my inner feelings

suspect might have been.

The Cooper: The poster appeared too good to be true. It reads like ancient reports of the Golden Age, or those in regard to an island paradise of some sort.

The blacksmith: (*smiles*) It would be the exact nature of hell to veil itself, would it not?

A colonist; swordsman: But we are all here now, and we can't stir a stick in a pot and cause ourselves to appear elsewhere, or back on England's shores.

Eleanor Dare: If we could, we would still be banned from home, since the court would condemn us to the stake for stirring in the pot to get here.

Ananias Dare: So we might as well make the best of our time here, regardless of what our future holds. Nobody promised anybody a rose garden, last I can recall. Times will surely become difficult, we must always assume.

The carpenter: (*holds right index finger up*) But! Allow ourselves to examine the bright side! The main house inside the fortress is already half up. By tomorrow, since we have so many work hands, the sides shall be up and the roof on. Inside the palisade here surrounding this fort, several smaller homes are going up rather quickly, don't you think?

A colonist; swordsman: (*gazes around, grimaces*) Somehow I feel we are constructing our own prison. What crimes have we committed? That of only being humble yeomen or laborers with no choices or chances for advancement, rather than aristocrats? Shall the hell this place more than likely veils consume us all for these crimes of the cradle, when it finally reveals itself?

Lieutenant governor: (*walks in from the beach, angry face*) What a waste of time, this foolish jibber! I could hear it before I entered through the These gaps in the palisade. Ye all should be ashamed of thyselfes. Much labor still lies in the wait round here!

Eleanor Dare: (*glares toward the Lieutenant governor*) 'Tis true Lieutenant. The sensation I perceive about this place is one of deep apprehension. A bad spirit lurks throughout the entire area. I sense his presence.

Lieutenant governor: We have pikemen and infantryman placed on the outside on twenty four hour guard. Should any threatening sounds be heard about in the night, a flaming arrow shot high into the night sky will suffice as a valid warning.

The carpenter: Where is our company we were supposed to meet when we arrived, as I understood?

Lieutenant governor: What company mate?

Eleanor Dare: I know of the colonists left here who were supposed to hold this fort until we arrived. There were only fifteen as I understand, but at least that many more were Irish servants and slaves.

Lieutenant governor: (*jaws dropping*) These slaves were from the Spanish south in majority, my fair lady.

Eleanor Dare: (*hard face*) All the more reason why they should be here among us now. Where are they?

Lieutenant governor: Maybe, my lady, they lurk about on the beach..

The blacksmith: Then why was the area so rubble strewn inside the palisade and fortress here? Did they build anything during the time they were hereabouts? Why did they so obviously scatter?

Lieutenant governor: (*huffs*) Obviously for better pickings, mate!

Eleanor Dare: Did father mention any details concerning the many skeletons he and my dear husband discovered when we first landed? I overheard their private conversations. That is how I know of this.

Lieutenant governor: (*swallowing hard*) Was a bad wind stirred hereabouts, prior to our landing?

The cooper: Surely any knowledge thereof be thine, sir?

Lieutenant governor: Thou knowest what I do not.

Eleanor Dare: (*gazes around, sighs*) Harbingers are not welcoming.

The blacksmith: Like what, my fair lady?

Eleanor Dare: These guards the lieutenant speaks of? One eased away into the middle of the night, to search out a puddle on the edge of the beach he knew was filled with crab.

The cooper: What about it, my lady?

Eleanor Dare: Thou art not aware, Lieutenant?

Lieutenant governor: (*swallows hard, hangs his head*) Somewhat, but unclear on the details.

Eleanor Dare: (*gazes around*) Well, he was found dead on the beach with five arrows protruding from his torso! What does anybody make of this, Lieutenant?

Lieutenant governor: Why, I know not, my lady. Who was the unfortunate chap?

Eleanor Dare: George Howe, the recruited pikeman ye spoke of. How miraculous it

is that he had no wife, nor no lady with child! What would she do?
Who among these saps would offer her valid relief, except in some
form of carnal favor exchange lending to her bearing another child!

Lieutenant governor: (*hangs his head*) My apologies lady. I hate that Howe
experienced this cruel misfortune.

Eleanor Dare: I am here only because of my dear husband. It was his determination
for us to be here, as man and wife. But I am a woman of sound
mind. I notice our food reserves. The warm months shall be coming
to a close soon. Where are our crops? It's too late to plant, I suppose.
Most of these lubberworts are far too lazy to break ground and plant
anyway. How much do we have in our larder? All I can say is it will
be eight months until we can plant. Maybe somehow the same
Virginians who slew George are generous and will share with us!

Lieutenant governor: But we have Manteo. He is our saving grace in these parts.
He can negotiate on our behalf.

Eleanor Dare: Maybe so, Lieutenant, but he should most definitely be rewarded for
his efforts. The English, unfortunately, are not known for being a
generous lot.

The blacksmith: Let us all gather around and say our prayers to the good Lord in
heaven above. In the end, he is the only one who can save us.

*The blacksmith, the cooper, the swordsman, Eleanor Dare, Ananias Dare, the
carpenter, the Lieutenant governor, clasp hands in a circle and pray:*

Eleanor Dare: Our father, we gather here on these strange shores to beseech thy
intervention. Our intentions are positive, our means meager, we
know not what fortunes or misfortunes lie in store. The day is new,
and only thine all seeing eyes can lead us through to golden shores.
Ah men.

The group: A-men!

Lights dim

The blacksmith, the cooper, the swordsman, Eleanor Dare, Ananias Dare, the carpenter, the Lieutenant governor, exit the stage.

Scene 3

The military guard assumes formation at attention and fully armed before the palisade entrance. Twenty four hour guards are on post outside the palisade on all points. Tension inside the palisade and fortress area is high and on alert. Chief managers of the colony gather.

Enter John White, Edward Stafford

John White: We desperately need to patch up relations between us and the Secotan hereabouts. Grenville certainly made a tangle for us to weave our way out of. The situation at hand can not be ignored any longer. All of us must jettison aside our prejudices and high minded self viewpoints, and come down to the reality of our situation.

Edward Stafford: (*glares outward towards the sea, then back towards the woods*)
What specifically is our present situation, governor? I only command the pinnacle yonder, sir.

John White: 'Tis like this. These thin, wastrel appearing people may strike us as lowlife beggars, motivating our own sensibilities to lash out in bitter repugnance, but these people, for whate'er they may be, are also the overwhelming majority. They may not possess firearms, but they have some mighty powerful bows that bear an astonishing capacity for

slaying stag from forty yards out. No doubt, their bows and arrows can at least match any longbow ever held in English possession, sir.

Edward Stafford: Who struck first?

John White: Grenville, in his rage born from the repugnance he felt in his view of these people, born from his perspective. His God forsaken silver cup went a-missing. The cup could have wallowed over the edge of the rowboat as the passengers climbed out. A passerby could have taken it! (*approaches and grabs Stafford by both arms*) His own men could have poached the goblet, yet Grenville chose to go on a murderous rampage when it went missing, based on an assumption of guilt toward these citizens hereabouts for it.

Edward Stafford: And pause to think in the moment, John, (*sighs*) thy innocent colonists shall pay the price for all of this tragedy delivered by Raleigh's cousin.

John White: Our duty is to make this horrible wrong right, for the love of salvation and success!

Edward Stafford: (*smiles sarcastically*) What alternative choice lies before us, John? Should we survive and thrive in the name of good Queen and country, we shall be prompt about getting on with it. What move lies next to be made, John? What hand from this deck sitting before us shall we next draw? Our choice must be a wise one. The ante is far too high for us to assume high minded risks. We must deliberate every future decision from this point onward.

John White: This is what we shall do. I'll assign Manteo to assist ye. Him and thyself shall travel to Dasemongueponke to meet with the Croatoan council and repair relations. At this point in our story we are willing to accept almost any condition. We have little, if any, bargaining room. We want them as allies, not enemies. They must understand where their own gain lies in bonding with us.

Edward Stafford: When is the call for our exit toward this village ye speak of?

John White: Sunrise tomorrow morning.

Edward Stafford: *(smiles)* The move on shall be pronto with the proper time, sir.

*Lights dim
Two minute pause*

Lights gradually brighten

Manteo and Stafford enter the palisade surrounding the village of Dasemongueponke. Manteo points toward the council lodge. Several women with their hair cut straight across their foreheads pass them by, smiling toward them, laughing, talking among themselves. One of these young women has two paint marks going up and down upon her chin, the other has three.

Woman with three marks: *(pauses before them, smiling timidly)* Dou dou, ding tang, tin-gem.

Manteo: *(smiling, laughing)* Thou has charmed her fancy, she says.

Edward Stafford: *(smiles, glances up and down the woman)* She appears well proportioned, mate. We're busy at the moment, however.
Pleasure and business never mixes well.

Manteo: The three chin marks and the straight cut of hair mean she's married, but her husband allows her to be mercenary.

Edward Stafford: What do the two chin marks and straight cut of hair mean?

Manteo: She's single and mercenary. She's also a mite younger.

Edward Stafford: What be her fees?

Manteo: A star-band bowl of dried, crushed cassina.

Edward Stafford: Show me the measure, beau-tic.

Manteo: Yonder, by the council lodge doors. Behold the bowls with the band and the stars in the center. This bowl the size of two fists and two fists deep filled with dried and crushed cassina, will fetch one a night with her.

Edward Stafford: Can she take that much cassina?

Manteo: No, but she can trade it out for salt and tobacco, and these items bear much more in value. This value may then be transferred into wampum. Oten the Spanish will swap it out for brandy or El Caneya, which costs much more but is highly esteemed anywhere among any tribe hereabouts.

Edward Stafford: Would her expense be justified by her value return?

Manteo: *(laughs, smiles)* Oh, she's very well versed in all of the delicate arts. Don't be intimidated by her youth.

Manteo and Edward Stafford step into the council lodge. Seven solemn Virginia elders sit around a fire. They all glance up.

1st native elder: Wousay sassafras, dooly bouquet?

Manteo: *(smiles, turns toward Edward Stafford)* He says hello, I behold two men on a mission. *(turns toward 1st elder)*. Been boutay, tin ding dow dung. Ring ting tang.

1st native elder: *(eyes widens, tosses back head)* Zing lay! Proton be no dou, bing Ting.

Manteo (*turns toward Edward Stafford*) I asked him what became of Grenville's

men. He tells me Wanchese recruited and led a coalition of tribes against them. These tribes attacked from every side, slaughtering every colonist remaining, down to the last one.

Edward Stafford: I heard this ruler died in his fight with the Lanes men. The ruler was a direct subordinate of this Wanchese, so it appears.

Manteo: The youth in study for his position continues the fight. It was their men who slew the palisade guard recently. Their leader still yet lives. He lays low, remaining out of sight. The one who died was a Weroance from the Secotan tribe

Edward Stafford: (*frustrated, grunts*) What gift might we offer for reconciliation?

Manteo: (*gazes around at all seven of the elders*) Maneo, yawaha, dobo jublow forbeshirum? (*opens his arms wide*) Dozippy, boutay, bornello bobo kato?

The seven elders: (*eyes wild, mouths gaping*) Keembeerisheem! Woshorebemi! Roo Too bro tom?

Manteo: (*turns toward Edward Stafford*) I asked them about reconciliation. They asked me what the gift was that could ever replace kindred blood needlessly spilled. They then replied that burying the hatchet was beyond consideration, until an equal amount of English blood was spilled and the natural balance restored.

Edward Stafford: Try again. Maybe they shall come through for us.

Manteo: (*opens hands palms up, spreads them apart*) Rin tin tin-dao?

The seven elders: (*Stern, wide eyed, silent*)

Manteo: Try one more time.

Manteo: (*turns toward the tribal elders*) Dou manteo? Mortey zeebo?

The seven elders: (*stern, silent, three arise to stir the coals in the flame*)

Edward Stafford: Very well then, Manteo. We shall exit these premises now. I desperately wish situations would have differed. Grenville certainly seems to have sabotaged my best efforts with his reckless unjustifiable behavior. I'm tempted to inform the queen of his inconsiderate actions against these citizens.

Stage lights gradually fade. The seven elders, Edward Stafford, Manteo, woman with the two marks, women with the three marks, exit.

Scene 4

August eight, 1587

Darkness before dawn. The armed men gather by torchlight. Guards remain around the palisade and at the entrance to the fortress.

Enter John White

John White: It's been nine days since the day of our appeal to the Secatan for reconciliation. Let it now be them who made the first call for battle, directed against us!

Ist citizen militiaman: Not only in rejection of our call for reconciliation, nay, allow us not to forebear their unprovoked murder of our innocent guard, George Howe.

Militiamen in unison: Our offers of kindness and reconciliation shall not be Held into disregard, especially in lieu of cold calculating Murder!

2nd militiaman: Blood shall spill today, lest we shall fail in maintaining the celestial scales balance!

3rd militiaman: Adventures high and adventures low, round and round this world we go. We live to frolic, a life reserved for the bold, lest we overlook huge buckets brimming with silver and gold!

4th militiaman: Get thy powder, grab thy gun, the battle before us must be won. Scoop up thy lead, lest the word not be said, their widows shall cry once our firelocks be fed. Let us rally ho before we go, we must find our place before the enemy shows.

Stage lights fade out

Three minutes pass

Stage lights slightly brighten, then brighten gradually as the later action moves forward along.

The small battalion, John White, Lieutenant governor, Edward Stafford, Manteo March quietly through the woods back toward Dasemongueponke. They arrive silently in the shadows before the palisade entrance.

John White: (*audible whisper*) 'Tis all quiet. Something 's a miss. These people are up and down throughout the night, like the mapacha as the Spanish call 'em. A night's long sleep isn't needed.

1st pikeman: (*audible whisper*) Huh now! I hear a rustle amongst these cabins. Can anything be seen ahead in this infernal moonlight gloom?

Manteo: (*audible whisper*) I behold shadows glinting hither and thither therein.

Ananias Dare: (*firm, audible whisper*) Allow us to be weary, damn weary. We

possess no room for mistakes.

John White: (*firm, audible whisper through gritting teeth, levels off*) So tell me now boy, if it is not us who defends our interests and takes up for our own, then who else, pray tell? The Spanish? These Virginia citizens? Even the Croatoan? Eh? May all and our convictions be like the moon and the earth below. (*opens hands palm up, spreads them apart, shrugs*) What is, is!

Ananias Dare: Must the fact be repeated where we are not the majority in this land? When shall this fighting and misunderstanding ever end?

3rd pikeman: Let the ball fall and hit the wall, twee-pea! I'm ripe and ready for anything.

Manteo: (*eyes widen, cups both hands behind his ears*) Huh now! I hear coarse voices and scuttling feet. I perceive shadows flashing in betwixt these cabins. There be more of 'em at large!

2nd pikeman: Their platoon must be martialing into some sort of formation, I tell Ye! They heard our whispers.

John White: Pikemen, swordsmen, and infanteria, half make way 'round this palisade in search of an alternative entrance on the backside. Send a man over to me when it's discovered. Upon receiving word, we shall enter in. It shall be them at our mercy, with us entering and blocking 'em on all sides.

Ananias Dare: One day future from the time, it shall be us in their center, and them without mercy for us. Such be my great fear, sir! I'll take the blame. I was out for fortune and adventure. Such was my carnal sin. Deep down I fear for my wife and the child she carries inside her body.

Manteo: (*gazes over, eyebrows raised*) Aye sir, the motion has been made, the die

has now been cast. The feather down floats where the spring wind blows.

2nd pikeman: Where the wheel of time rolls us into, nobody knows, sir. We're here, aye, our glowing moment is now, and it's us or them, sir!

Swordsman: *(returns from behind the palisade, approaches White)* Sir, we found it! We all can quietly squeeze through this unnoticed palisade gate.

John White: The punitive wave surges forward upon thy return.

Swordsman races back around the palisade. White eases through the entrance area with his patrol. The others move through the rear gap in the palisade. A group of Virginians are meandering among the cabins oblivious to the colonist's presence. These Virginians perceive a sudden stir, exiting from among the cabins, finding themselves abruptly pinched in between the colonists before them and those behind them.

John White: *(suddenly shoulders a blunderbuss)* Halt, ye saucy dogs! Who goes there? Speak now or forebear thy address for all eternity.

Virginians turn and scatter among the cabins

John White: Fire! Rush forward merry men, slash, and stab. Have no mercy nor forbearance on might of force and arms. This moment be our's for the taking!

Matchlocks fire from the front and the right side opposite of the entrance near the palisade. The spearmen, the pikemen, and the swordsmen rush forward from the front, and from the right side. When the small garrison of Virginia natives race toward the right and the entrance, the matchlocks fire again.

Ist pikeman: I want a head for my door post!

2nd pikeman: I bore the same thought. Yet a young well roasted hind for my Reaming ramrod shall do me so much better at this moment!

3rd pikeman: I want one of their hatchets for my own wall, and a head!

The swordsman: I agree. Wherefore art their women? I yearn for a youthful strumpet!

John White: (*walking around, calmly surveying*) We've only slain fifteen men! Wherefore art the others? All is eerily silent, my saucy men!

3rd pikeman: (*approaches from the darkness to the far left of where they stand*) Behold such a door post trophy! (*holds up a Virginia chieftain's severed head by the hair. Gazes into its bloody face*) My, how it's a damn beauty for sure!

Manteo: These are not Secotan warriors. They are Croatoan. Behold the blue tattoo on the left cheek, and the rod on the right. Behold the white ring around the right eye, and the black ring around the left. Do I not bear the same?

John White: What's on with this, Manteo? My word! What have we done here Today, on what could have been such a pleasant morn?

Manteo: The Secotan intuitively knew of thy possible return, so they vacated these premises. Some of the Croatoan received word, arriving during the early morn to plunder whate'er remained. I hate that my people have been so wantonly murdered, but I can comprehend the position and sympathize with the imposing situation the English find themselves thrust into.

Ananias Dare: As I was saying, sir. Us poor colonists, such as my dear wife, let alone the child she carries, knows not in lieu of such notes as this, where the wheel of fortune shall carry us next.

Lights gradually dim, all exit the stage

Night time back at the Roanoke fortress and palisade

Ananias Dare: Are we all content with our choices now, oh ye merry men of the round table?

1st militiaman: We certainly made our point, eh? A damn foolish one at that, I must say.

3rd pikeman: That point is indeed most fearful.

John White: I was deceived. (*face in hands*) Surely I must be a grangousier.

Swordsman: The match has already been lit, sir. Tears of sorrow are vanity.

Cannoneer: I've collected stag-shot for the mounted swivel six pounder, and more for the one on the wheel cart.

Ananias Dare: (*smacks his forehead with both opened hands*) When is all of this mischief ever going to cease? We must live here, mates! Who amongst ye sailed all the way across that ocean yonder only to die here, in such a God forsaken place?

Cannoneer: Who said anything in regard to us dying?

Ananias Dare: On and on we callously and carelessly disregard who the majority is around these parts.

Cannoneer: A barrel filled with a lady's finger tips should suffice, when the whites of their eyes become apparent. Enough of these cast about should render us a majority in due course of time.

Ananias Dare: Who amongst any here spies my point? These people, now dead..., that we so carelessly slew, were Croatoan, our only allies!

Ist pikeman: It's under our control, mate, fear not. The cannoneer spoke the truth.
We all misstep, yet who is around to condemn us?

Ananias Dare: My holy word! My mind can't accept what mine ears hear! (*turns around to face the cannoneer and John White*) My wife and child dwell here amongst these trees, by this beach hereabouts. That is right! My woman is with child, and this child soon cometh. Art ye all in with that notion?

2nd pikeman: We understand, sir. (*spreads out his hands, palms up*) What is now done, is done.

Ananias Dare: Ye still haven't grasped a hold to it yet, I see! (*gazes around*) Doesn't anybody behold the truth I speak of? My child is soon to be born, but behold the world this child is about to enter into! Surely it could have been heaven, but my fear is in regard to the hell all of ye have transformed it to! My child, birthed onto the hearth of hell? This never had to be. Our only allies here now despise us for Certain.

Manteo: Never fear, sir. Maybe I can help remedy the unfortunate situation.

John White: How? How can this foolhardy mistake ever be rationalized with thy people?

Manteo: Allow me to go out at first light tomorrow. What seems impossible is still yet possible.

John White: Is the impossible still yet possible, dear Manteo? May long pent up water suddenly unleashed, still flow so smoothly? Does an angry raging sky yet allow soft rays of the sun to shine through? Are burning lies and vengeful minds still yet soothed by the power of truth? Might both our minds peek through our own folly, as do innocent children in a springtime flowering field of youth?

Stage lights gradually dim out

Three minutes pass

Stage lights gradually brighten

Dawn at the Indian village known as Hatteras on Croatoan Island. Manteo enters the council longhouse.

Manteo: (*speaking in the native language*) Council, I beseech thee, in the name of the supreme God, Gitche Michoba, who created us, all of life, and the world around us.

Chief Pikwaka: We hear thy appeal, oh thou son of Hatteras. We anticipate thy reason for appearing before us. Our chief sorcerer, Spicklicker, beheld every sight and sound in the sacred pools, in the flights of birds, and in the smoke of our hearth fires. We are affirmative regarding the positive deeds thee hath given these moon-faced strangers, yet we are fully aware of dark powers upon us, upon others far and wide.

Manteo: What dark powers, oh wise one?

Chief Pikwaka: Everywhere far and near their feet tread, death follows. Many villages sicken after they tread through. We hear messages from carriers and traveling traders confirming the warnings from our chief sorcerer, Spicklicker.

Manteo: Albeit, much wrong has been done. Often folly dominates the minds of otherwise sensible men.

Chief Pikawaka: Wanchese has given us and every village for miles around adamant warnings in regard to these strange occupiers.

Manteo: Wanchese hungers for war, my father. He desires an important name for

himself. Whereas I come in peace, always and forever more.

Chief Pikawaka: (*makes no immediate reply, puffs a pipe*) The knicky-knicky bestows visions, confirming reports, Manteo, that our people stand in harm's way. Wanchese traveled to the foreign land, from whence these strangers originate, as did thyself. Wanchese witnessed the chief thyself and he sailed back with, attacking another vessel without provocation, and his men slew the entire crew of innocents, only for the ship and the possessions of the people thereon.

Manteo: This is true, but these English are at war with this nation and the owners of this ship. Besides, the Spanish have occupied our shores for a much longer period of time. Traders from afar have spoken in regard to them. Traders from our own village have walked among them. Their reputation is of a much crueler nature than are these English. What is it to us if the English slay them all?

The council room breaks into laughter. The pipe is passed around

Chief Pikawaka: (*remains firm faced, never smiles, pauses in deliberation*) The Calabash is a bestower of great insight and wisdom, my dear son. I have had visions, confirming those of our chief sorcerer, Spicklickler. Three herons arose from the little alligator pond down by the red creek in the swamp the other day. The flap of their wings, the manner in which they drew up their legs as they flew, reveal dark harbingers these moon faced strangers in our midst herald, my dear son.

Manteo: The blue heron is surrounded by all seeing spirits, my dear father. Three is a number signifying divine origin.

Chief Pikawaka: (*turns to face Manteo*) The spirits informed Wanchese of the wickedness in the intent of these strangers, my dear son. Their presence shall mean death for all of us, and total destruction of our

culture. Us and all of our kind, shall soon be expunged from our own land, for all eternity.

Manteo: It doesn't have to be that way, father.

Chief Pikawaka: *(in a raging anger)* Notice what has already occurred, son!

Dozens in the village we looted earlier, murdered for lacking of a ridiculous cup, to include women and children. Nobody ever provoked that. Everywhere these people tread death follows in their wake. People are sickening in many villages even as I speak these very words! We all are cursed with these people in our midst, Son.

Manteo: Please forgive and show mercy father. We are all they have.

Chief Pikawaka: Now they fire upon us, cut us to pieces, not to mention their young men violating our daughters and tiny granddaughters as these innocents wash our clothes by the edge of the stream behind our village! I find it difficult to observe where they deserve any mercy, my son.

Manteo: Many wrongs have been committed, my dear father. But can mercy and forgiveness not be shown once more again?

Chief Pikawaka turns toward the council and addresses them. There is an emotional rumble and stir among them. A few minutes pass.

Chief Pikawaka: I go against my own feelings, my dear son. The others here in this council as thou hast now heard, are willing to lay the hatchet back. We shall forebear on our retribution, my dear son.

Manteo: Thankyou dearly father!

Cheir Pikawaka: I must give all due warning, son. Wanchese is even more aroused into action against these villainous intruders. It has been

said that thou has been labeled a traitor among those in his midst.
Ye and thy company have been condemned to death in his
council. One more violation against our own, and all of these
moon-faced people must die!

Manteo: Thy words and the words of this great council shall be heeded, oh father.

Stage lights dim. Manteo, Chief Pikawaka, the council members, exit the stage.

Scene 5

Next morning

Chapel tent inside the palisade back at the fort on Roanoke Island

Enter Manteo

Manteo: It's all done. The great spirit has blessed thee, oh congregation of England,
with a second chance at life.

John White: What great accomplishment. I stagger on hearing thy blessed words!
(*sighs deeply*) The relief is overwhelming.

Eleanor Dare: Hold thy breath now. Raleigh's enduring colonial effort finally has
its next opportunity for life, father.

Ananias Dare: Imagine that, fellow men. (*gazes around*) We dare not throw the
next effort away.

Lieutenant governor: (*smiles, raises right index finger*) Should we do so, my merry
men, Raleigh's colonial charter shall perish in the furnaces of
folly with us.

1st pikeman: Who is in charge of fetching a return on the investment fees of this colony, plus the promised interest?

Ananias Dare: Grenville I fear has gone a-pirating. He always was one to jump at the Queens endorsement for quick bounteous profits.

Lieutenant governor: Not a word on the specific's my way.

Ananias Dare: (*faces John White*) And what about Drake, sir?

John White: Not a word, but no doubt, being England's warrior in her battle against Spain, he too has gone a-pirating.

1st pikeman: Hmm, (*smiles, smacks*) Seems Raleigh's final hope for compensation directed back toward the colonies investors, are hinged solely on the success of this colony alone, eh? How does the ebb flow now, sir?

Ananias Dare: Based on our past up to this moment, future bodings are not very good.

Lieutenant governor: What shall the good Queen make of it, should the colony fail?

John White: There shant be any failure. I'm the governor now, and Manteo has made amends on our behalf.

Eleanor Dare: I feel an uneasy wind, father. I dreamt I walked outside beyond the palisade last night. The dream seemed so real I almost felt it truly occurred. I beheld a premonition in the sky.

John White: What premonition, my dear daughter?

Eleanor Dare: A glowing flower with a tail. It blossomed and held high above where we all art standing. According to the shepherd's handmaiden back home, such premonitions are harbingers of terror and great

misfortune yet to come. I sense an impending darkening of the sun
in places throughout the earth.

John White: A milk maid's words bear no fear for me, daughter.

Eleanor Dare: A sinking sensation persists, like a ship with a hidden hole. Standing
water reveals a leak, but even the knowledgeable ship craftsman can
ne'er find it at times.

1st pikeman: My sinking sensation is for Raleigh. Forfeiture of the alliance's
investments, made at the good Queen's promotional assistance, bodes
for dark waves, my good neighbors.

Eleanor Dare: I've argued the point. Which be worse on the neck, a rough hemp
noose or a headsman's sharp ax?

John White: I feel a winning gambler's elation. No time for wasteful words,
bearing harbinger of deceit and dread. There be work to do, my
merry men. *(nods his head)* Let us now commence, bishop.

Standing before the altar and the podium

Chief Bishop of Aberdeenshire: Yes sir. On this day of August ten, 1587, I, Leslie
Mac Rath Dowlais, present this hallowed diadem
in the name of God Almighty, the crown of
England, the virgin queen, Elizabeth, to Manteo
of Hatteras Village.

Manteo: *(steps forward, smiles)* I humbly accept the offer. 'Tis my honor and duty
to assist the English as circumstances befit.

John White: Manteo, as governor of Virginia, appointed by none other than the
queen herself, both the bishop and myself baptize thee in the name of
the God Almighty and his son, Jesus Christ, from whom we humbly
feel ye are a true gift.

The bishop and John White dip their hands into a bucket of water gathered from the Chowan river. Both men place a handful of the water on the head of Manteo.

Chief Bishop of Aberdeenshire: Bless ye son of Croatoan and honorable son of merry England.

John White: In the name of God Almighty, bless ye.

A bronze crown studded with ruby and emerald garnished from a Spanish Galleon is brought forth upon a crimson silken pillow by the 1st pikeman and handed to John white.

John White: In the name of God almighty, the nation of England, and the virgin Queen, Elizabeth, I, John White, governor and lord of all the Virginia territory, crown ye. Manteo, son of the Croatoan hailing from Hatteras Village, Lord of Roanoke and Dasamongueponke. (*places the diadem upon the head of Manteo*).

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: May the blessings of God Almighty always go with thee, and may ye always bear the blessing of her majesty's Virginia colony in mind.

John White: In making this motion we are humbly gracious forever unto ye, for all that ye intend and have accomplished on our behalf.

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: May the grace of God Almighty always go with ye Manteo, Amen and Amen.

Lights dim

Two minutes pass, lights snap back on with direct focus upon a young native nymph.

Native nymph: So the settler's chief now shepherds the helm, as these stranger's occupy his people's renowned place. A man of peace and adoration

he makes, as he welcomes in a darkening sun with his own personal invitation. Shall we flee or should we resist what amounts to an impending invasion? At midnight he ghosts among us warn of an impending disaster, a cultural and heritage wane in the forthright advance of a thriving new nation.

Lights snap off

all on stage exit, curtains fall

Act 4

Scene 1

Tuesday, August 18, 1587

At the daub and wattle cabin on the south end of the fortress palisade . Armed guards posted on either side of the door.

Enter Ananias Dare, Manteo

Ananias Dare: How now Manteo? The night was rough around the twelfth striking.

Manteo: Sir, the fat moon held an eerie sapphire haze on it.

Ananias Dare: Indeed, all stand on high alert.

Manteo: Spanish platoons were witnessed by our scouts moving about on land, thirty miles from this spot. Our intuition is that they are aware of the colony here.

Ananias Dare: A fact of mighty few allies and being inside a sea of blood thirsty

enemies is unsettling to me.

Manteo: The Croatoan rule hereabouts. This island is ours. Nobody enters without our allowance, sir, and they do so on our terms.

Ananias Dare: Thy people have been violated by mine, Manteo. The hatchet may be jettisoned momentarily, but understandably a subtle animosity exists.

Manteo: Such devices are not the way of my people, Ananias.

Ananias Dare; For a price in favors or valuable commodities, our future could be sold on a whim, I fear.

Manteo: The Croatoan are a loyal people. When we are at war our decisions are deliberated. A consensus for peace is a universal decision among us, and its final.. Long as the opposing party doesn't violate their own side of the sworn oath.

Ananias Dare: In our society a blue moon means beware, and on guard.

Manteo: Somebody arrives to take a harvest. The season to dry and fall is upon us all here yet once more. A fat blue moon signifies a full harvest.

John White: What a splendid time for living, my jolly fellows! (*lights a calabash filled with tobacco, puffs*)

Ananias Dare: Celebration for our first line on future success.

Manteo: (*lights his own calabash, puffs*) Here's to the azure-heron for good babes, my merry men! His tint unites him with that of the heavens, when a fat moon is similar in tint. Surely at least one good son is born somewhere hereabouts.

Ananias Dare: (*takes a puff from Manteo's calabash*) Here's to the raven for bad

babes! Without them the earth and all of mankind, bears no
Relish, secret yearning, or exhilaration!

John White: (*takes another puff*) As the saying goes down on Gobbler's Gulch
back in ole Lunnon Town; here's to the swallow for no babes! The
good motion of the ocean and the thrill of the kill is all that counts,
when the age is splendid and prosperous. I'm certain Grenville and
Drake would adamantly agree on this matter.

Virginia midwife: (*appears from the inside to the door, opens it*) Zou boo tang tin!

Manteo: Congratulations, my merry men, it's a female!

John White: (*reaches over, grabs Ananias left arm*) Congratulations my dear son!
Thy daughter is the first English child born on Virginia soil!

Virginia midwife: Ting juan moreo pekonia. Dow dang sang john, eh? Grootious
rootious partaken, no.

Manteo: Surprises to the left and surprises to the right. See what the night has
revealed? The cabin next door of Harvey, the lady Marjorie, has delivered
a man-child, now being an hour later!

John White: More, no doubt, shall soon come. There were five women with child
when our crew landed ashore. This colony shall most assuredly
thrive into an overwhelming abundance!

Stage lights fade out gradually

Stage lights gradually brighten

Back at the chapel tent inside the fortress. All of the colonists congregate

*Sunrise, August 19th, 1587
Wednesday*

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: We have been summoned to gather here today in honor of a truly joyous occasion. Two children have been born into our expanding flock. Praise God Almighty and long live the virgin Queen!

The entire congregation: Praise God Almighty, and long live the virgin Queen! In the holy name of his son, Jesus Christ.

Male colonist: Hosanna to Raleigh's colony!

Female colonist: Hosanna on high!

2nd male colonist: Long live Raleigh!

2nd female colonist: Long live Raleigh's colony!

The entire congregation: May our prosperity be longstanding.

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: Longstanding life and enduring prosperity commences with new birth. New birth into a prevalent culture, combined with that of our own, most certainly engenders it's dawning unique quality.

The entire congregation: May the developing mainland culture establish its own dominant position, when this marriage of our people weds itself with the land around us upon which we now stand.

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: May the babe be presented before us?

Ananias Dare: Oh blessed Bishop of Aberdeenshire, yes (*carries the babe to the Bishop in company with the mother*).

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: Art thou the babe's father?

Ananias Dare: Yes, I am the babe's father, sir.

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: Art thou, oh woman, the babe's mother?

Eleanor Dare: Yes, oh dear Bishop, 'tis I who is the babe's mother.

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: What be thy assigned name for the child?

Eleanor Dare: Her name is Virginia, Virginia Dare.

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: When was this child born?

Eleanor Dare: Last night at midnight, sir.

The entire congregation: *(gasps!)* Awe!

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: A bird on the wind proclaims another birth on this
night or thereabouts.

The entire congregation: *(gasps!)* Awe, how gracious. So let it be. So let it be!

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: May the babe be presented here before me on this
Moment?

Marjorie Harvey: *(walks with babe in arms. Stands beside Eleanor. Man stands
beside her)*

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: Art thou the babe's mother?

Marjorie Harvey: Yes dear Bishop, 'tis me.

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: An' this man be the babe's father?

Dyonis Harvey: Yes, dear Bishop. The baby's father I am.

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: Woman, what be thy name?

Marjorie Harvey: My name is Marjorie Harvey, sir.

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: Man, what be thy name?

Dyonis Harvey: My name is Dyonis Harvey, sir.

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: When was this child born?

Marjorie Harvey: Last night on the first hour, sir.

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: The fat blue moon signifies a full harvest. What be
this man-child's name, lady?

Marjorie Harvey: This child's name be Gabriel Harvey, sir.

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: Very well my lady. Sir, what be thy status?

Dyonis Harvey: 2nd assistant to governor White, sir.

The entire congregation: Twice they be, from twain they leave, released into this
land of abiding mystery. The day is come, the moment is
done, the flock is more to balance the score. Sure as the
rising sun, our moment is done.

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: Pass the wash bin.

Child assistant: (*brings the wash bin filled with water*)

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: What appeal have thee on part of this woman-child,
lady, as the child's mother?

Eleanor Dare: That Almighty God have his way in her life, be that what e'er it may.

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: (*dips a handful of water from the bin. Places the water on the baby's head*) By the divine will of Almighty God and the virgin Queen of England, I therefore christen thee, Virginia Dare, in these names twain.

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: As mother of this man-child, what divine appeal have thee, Marjorie, on his behalf?

Marjorie Harvey: I beseech the heavenly throne in earnest, my dear Bishop, that his name and person in comprehension, shall endure the ages.

1st Bishop of Aberdeenshire: Very well lady. So allow thy words to stand up straight on their own. (*dips right hand into the basin. Retrieves a handful of water*) In the name of holy God in Heaven above, and the virgin Queen on earth, I christen thee, Gabriel Harvey, in these names twain.

The entire congregation: Forward we all shall march into infinity, our destiny heretofore in the hands of God and his mighty angelic company. Th'ough field and woods, across wide and deep blue seas, toward a distant horizon beyond. By thy side all shall remain steadfast, neath thy divine wing, oh Lord in Heaven above, Amen and Amen!

Stage lights gradually fade out. All exit.

Scene 2

August 22, 1587

Fernandez and his sailors finished unloading the three ships on Roanoke island. John White and his assistants walk among the supplies as they are being hauled into the fort by the colonists.

Enter 1st Pikeman

1st Pikeman: I figured six months worth. I'll inventory again. Sir.

John White: I was fearful of this. Planting time passed prior to our arrival.
Supplies shall not be adequate for maintaining the one hundred
seventeen until April of next year.

1st pikeman: The generosity of the Croatoan shall see us through, eh?

John white: They've been reluctant to part, especially with maize and pulse.

1st pikeman: The heat has been dreadful hereabouts, sir. The water in the creek
behind us pulls back dramatically from the shore. Might this
observation be part of our problem, sir?

John White: (*gazes off into space*) If it is, then the penalty for our misfigure falls
upon our own shoulders.

1st pikeman: Raleigh's final efforts, alas, shan't fail sir.

John White: We simply shant allow it to, eh?

1st pikeman: Allow us to gather a consensus among the people, sir.

John White: Very well, so shall it be.

The two walk among the palisade and the fortress, among the colonists

John White: Call for meeting outside the fortress, inside the palisade area!

1st pikeman: Call for meeting of great importance. 'Tis mandated where all must attend!

John White: Meeting in the palisade area! Mandated where all must attend! Call for meeting!

The colonist congregate outside the fortress, yet inside the palisade area

1st colonist: Shiver me timbers oh good king, have we found silk, or stumbled upon our golden blessing yet?

1st colonial woman: Our bellies know chief. Arrow yonder or no arrows, them poles in the palisade be damned!

2nd colonist: The ole wench be right, good king. We can choose the reason for our coffin. Might it be by arrow or lack of decent food?

Two babies cry in the distance

2nd colonial woman: Another babe born, but might it be into heaven or into the bowels of hell? A proper decision befuddles the brain!

John White: Be calm. We all comprehend thy duress. In the name of Christ our Lord, we all shall prevail in our undertakings.

Lieutenant governor: We make our address on account of our concerns. Might they be food, or lack of cloth, or even want of more drink. We wish to resolve our concerns on this day and moment. What be thy collective call?

3rd colonial man: Allow us to venture abroad and go a-huntin'!

3rd colonial woman: Allow us to do a raid upon our Virginia enemies!

4th colonial man, math teacher: Sir, I have a much more practical idea. Allow us relocation across the channel and appeal to Manteo and his clan.

Half the gathered colonists cheer bravo, yes, and the other half boo, screaming never.

John White: Well I bear no intention for giving up the call! Raleigh's colony shall thrive! Tis I who am ye governor now.

3rd colonial man: Moving in with Manteo might be O.K., but myself and many others are more for abandoning this position for the one some ten leagues northbound. The place where Grenville explored.

The crowd explodes with many yelling yes, move, and others saying no, go with Manteo.

4th colonist: Move in with Manteo? Give me death before I spend another week in this place!

5th colonists wife: Well blow me away knave! Go on leagues up river then, to find thy face slammed into the mud one morning. Us married and older people know what's best! Let us and ours do what's most practical and fit right in with Manteo on Croatoan in the village of Hatteras there.

The crowd of colonists push and shove one another, yelling, swearing, throwing punches. Many vowing to go away in one direction, and others vowing to move to Croatoan into the village of Hatteras.

4th colonial woman: Why shant ye return to merry England on our behalf, White? Neither of these solutions are valid, far as I am concerned here.

Eleanor Dare: Father, such a request does seem reasonable.

John White: I sincerely hate leaving ye and thy young child, my fair daughter. My heart will weaken with every day I am not in thy sweet company.

Ananias Dare: What shall it be sir, two months gone, plus one a gathering? Two more to return? Eh? That makes five gone and in plenty of time before next planting season.

John White: Allow us to give due consideration, although my will is slim.

Gathered colonists in unison: White, on to England! White on to England. Back to that place from whence we began. On to merry England!

The colonists break up and return into their cabins.

Inside White's cabin

Lieutenant governor: What be our best move, White?

John White: Victal rations be slim, Jubal. What be our alternatives?

Lieutenant governor: I honestly fear the colony will break apart. Such an occurrence is not part of my will.

John White: Then ye art in possession of only a single option then.

Lieutenant governor: What be that consideration?

John White: Our only option is to return. I'll place my seven assistants to man the palisade and the fortress until our return.

Lieutenant governor: Who shall stand in as governor?

John White: My son-in-law, unless ye so remain present.

Lieutenant governor: Where shall I serve best?

John White: Thy experience is tough to supersede. Ananais is still much lacking.

Lieutenant governor: Thy son-in-law means well.

John White: My son-in-law is a brick and tile building contractor. He has no experience needed here as we initiate. We need organizers and negotiators. We need people who know how to fight, should such a thing ever be needed.

Lieutenant governor: Such a situation can't be managed alone.

John White: You shall have my seven assistants.

Lieutenant governor: I want a list of names, sir.

John White: Roger Bailie, Ananias Dare, Christopher Cooper, Thomas Stephenson, John Sampson, Dyonas Harvey, Roger Prat. George Howe was a great military functional and authoritarian leader, but we are aware of his fate.

Lieutenant governor: We still retain men of arms, sir.

John White: We must always remain aware of our surroundings.

Lieutenant governor: We have that foreign ally in our ranks, I presume.

John White: Manteo shall remain at the helm of our negotiations. At present we possess no other alternatives.

Lieutenant governor: We must present our position to the people.

John White: My heart lies there not, but with my daughter and granddaughter.

Lieutenant governor: Well all are here with us now, and all are in need of assistance.

John White and the Lieutenant governor exit the house, walking among the people throughout the palisade area.

John White: *(rings a cowbell)* Call to congregate! Call to congregate! All, please gather around.

Lieutenant governor: Important news! Important information! Please gather around.

The colonist gather in the palisade area

1st colonial man: How now? Shorter rations make a stomach gnaw!

1st colonial woman: Our children cry. Thee hath thine! Ye know of our suffering.

2nd colonial man: *(smiling)* Is it true? Are we all engaging in a great hunt outside these standing logs, master?

John Smith: An inventory has been quantified. There are supplies at present for nine months.

Gathered colonists roar and scream

John Smith: The verdict is indeed thine! What be thy choice, daughter?

Eleanor Dare: Sail on thy way, father, back to merry England. Nine months shall pass quickly. We all art in dire need of victuals!

John Smith: Doth thy choice support thy wife, son?

Ananias Dare: Surely thy return shall best serve thy daughter and thy granddaughter.

John Smith: What be the verdict of the gathered crowd?

The congregation: Forward to England, to that space we all hail from! The place of our first dream when our day is finally done. We know ye heart remains true so go do what is best, lest good Raleigh's colony be through.

John Smith: The final word is in, the verdict rendered. (*sighs, gazes toward the sea*) First light tomorrow I set sail.

Gathered crowd cheers, scatters out toward the cabins

Eleanor Dare: (*hugs John Smith's neck, weeps*) Oh father, how I dread seeing you part with us! For how long shall ye be gone?

John Smith: I should return in six months . Maybe Raleigh can arrange for a huge supply detail to return with me, once he is aware of our dire situation. The food and general supplies should hold out until April or May, and longer if more rationing is applied.

Ananias Dare: I don't know. We've been cutting back on rations ever since we arrived. We have more mouths to feed now. Children have been born. The people are near a breaking point. Honestly, six months are about all the time we have.

John Smith: Well, there be Manteo still yet, no doubt a genuine gift from heaven.

Lieutenant governor: There be God and Manteo, and hope still yet. Only one man dead. We hate to miss him, but surely we could have fared much worse.

Stage lights gradually darken, all exit the stage save one. Stage lights focus on this

one

Female child: (*dressed as a pixie cherub*) Ye art leaving on a sailing ship, don't know if she'll sink or flip. I must be on my way once more again. If the sun fails to burn or I should n'er return, mind the grain and pump the butter churn, and may the hearth fires always warmly burn. Please don't cry this moment is alive, the air is clean and the grass is still yet green; darlings I shall surely return when the blue birds fly.

Oh now, I'm leaving on a sailing ship. 'Tis not a pleasure cruise nor an adventure trip. Let me sing of how it breaks my heart so to have no choice but to go. Hug thy children and stir the pumpkin stew, speak friendly to thy brethren and may thy troubles be few. I'm leaving out again on a sailing ship, could be a long or a short trip. Might encounter enemies or friends, I'm leaving out on the first good east wind, don't truly know when I'll make it back to this island again.

Scene 3

August 26, 1587

Sunrise outside of Fort Raleigh. The flagship, Lion, is anchored and being packed.

Enter Simon Fernandez

Simon Fernandez: I hate vacating so quickly, but situations lie in wait, sir.

John Smith: Ye have disobeyed my direct order. These harbors are shallow and the water is brackish. Food abounds, but is more plentiful in Chesapeake. How dare thee to be so inconsiderate of our fellow brethren!

Edward Spicer: *(sighs)* Many claim England is in likeness to a prison. We all arrived upon these shores in search of liberty and a fresh prosperous life, but what on earth do we now possess? Prison? Sickness? Incessant conflict? Life in a state of enduring destitution?

Edward Stafford: These pointed logs stuck in the ground and this guard house make a fine cage for the damned, eh? With ready made guards on top of that.

Ananias Dare: In a way we all possess what we deserve. Far too many of our actions have indeed been criminal, as I must remind the congregation, and condemned criminals must always find their way into the nearest prison.

Eleanor Dare: Aye, but our crimes have fetched us worse than a prison sentence, as I am compelled to give reflection. The locals have condemned us all to death, I fear. *(turns toward Simon Fernandez)* Shame on you for not allowing us to have a second chance at life, and being obsessed with thine own gains in other mysterious places *(suddenly points out toward the sea)* yonder in a distant mist!

John White: We are where we stand. The public has made their call. I am to exit out tomorrow in the Lion with ole Fernando. It truly breaks my heart to do so. My granddaughter was only born nine days ago. What if some unforeseen misfortune should have its way? *(hangs his head)* I hold a lagging fear inside my gut.

Eleanor Dare: Feelings are same, father, but examine the light end of this tunnel we all stand in. Ye shall only be gone six months. Our stores shall endure three more. All shall be well as they are. The colony shall labor and come to much fruit during the time of thy outing.

Edward Stafford: I sense an uneasy stir among the colonists. Many Irish are among them. Protestants and Catholics do not mix well, I must say. I observed in the stir the other day, where it was primarily the

younger protestants who wished to continue on upstream as we had planned. 'Tis mainly the catholic ones of more age who are most willing to remain firmly in place.

Eleanor Dare: I desire only what's best for my child I carry here, as are all the others with children. Children can't move around with the wind. They, like their mothers, need security.

John White: I have no true desire to go, (*hangs his head*) but yet at the same time, no choice but to do so.

Lieutenant governor: Grant us the protocol, governor.

John White: Tomorrow morning I'm going to make my exit. Should the colony need to exit out on their own from this place, leave me a carved note around here, explaining where I could go to find them upon my return. If the colony is under duress of any type, then show this with a maltese cross. I am well aware of the Spanish possessing a letter of writ for discovering the colony, and a royal order to destroy it upon doing so. They are in possession of an idea in general, of the place where this colony is located.

Lieutenant governor: The flyboat and the fully-rigged pinnace are ours, eh?

John White: Should the worst visit, good Lord forbid, then the way out is readily available. We possess a decent sized row-boat with a sail on The Lion, should such a thing be needed whilst we are out. The two big hauling rigs are thine.

Lieutenant governor: The harbor hereabouts is certainly not the best, nay, but we've also witnessed worse. We have Manteo and his people who shall carry us through the difficult times. Six months, sir, shall fly by in all honesty, once our men and women busy themselves with tending to the needs of the colony and their own families.

Eleanor Dare: (*hangs head, sobs*) Father when tomorrow morning arrives, surely thy exit shall rip my poor heart in two. The sensation certainly is one of being the best of times and the worst. The horrendous murder of George Howe truly upset myself and many more. All of the children were disturbed greatly. I only desired being here to give support to my husband and his inner need for great success. Being part of this colonial undertaking is fine, however I possess a sensation of being better off had I remained in England. I have no idea what brings me in possession of these feelings.

Stage lights dim suddenly. All exit the stage, save one. A hazy light gradually reappears, with focus directed upon a single remaining character.

Young servant maiden : (*gazing out toward the sea*)

Somewhere o'er a distant horizon,
far far away,
there lies a land I've always heard of
with nothing but sunny days.

Somewhere o'er a distant horizon,
Where hearts are forever true,
And dreams that we all dare to dream
Lead to the visions of splendor
That those grand heroes of old once knew.

Someday I'll wish upon a star,
And wake up with these gloomy blue seas far
Behind me,
Where troubles melt like snow in tar,
Far away from shabby buildings and the same old
trees;
Oh,

That's where ye shall surely find me!

Someday o'er a distant horizon,
That's where the albatross flies,
The albatross flies far beyond all gloom o'er the
Seas,
So why can't thee and I?

Someday o'er a distant horizon,
We all shall finally find our gift of liberty,
In a land where angels ne'er cry,
Inside a bountiful cornucopia born from the hand of
God,
Then granted in a blessing that shall thrive for all
eternity down through history.

Stage lights gradually dim into darkness. Young servant maiden exits

Scene 4

At sunrise John White and Simon Fernandez board The Lion. The port closes, the anchor is drawn. The colonists gather about on the beach waving farewell.

Out on the beach as the penance returns.

Enter Lieutenant Governor

Lieutenant governor: 'Twill be a sunny August day, mind ye, an' a fair wind to go with it.

Ananias Dare: An' The Lion already eases along on her way abroad.

Lieutenant governor: Why the anxiety mate? We retain the flyboat and the pennace. Both will service us well, should such a time for it ever arrive.

Ananias Dare: (*glares into the face of the Lieutenant*) We might be in desperate need of his leadership soon. Regardless of what may be said to criticize, he is fearless and develops detailed flexible plans on a moment's notice.

Edward Spice:(*squints toward the ship and the rising sun*) We all must learn to live with our choices. We all are here, and our most pressing task is to consider our choices well, and succeed in spite of our challenges.

Lieutenant governor: What be our most pressing task at hand, sir?

Edward Spice: To beef up our palisade defenses. For the most part we only moved into what Lane and his men left to surround his dirt fortress. The holes in our defenses are gaping, to say the least. We barely even are in possession of defenses. Let us set to labor on filling these holes and strengthening that which remains standing.

Ananias Dare: I second such an observation. The ship pulls out to sea. The penance is anchoring down the river nearby. What a fine time to busy ourselves with concerns that truly matter.

Dyonas Harvey: (*as the colonists are walking back toward the fortress*) Men! Let us set to labor on the palisade defenses. Set to sawing. Set to striking fire! Set to digging holes for the posts we shall create. These gaps demand filling and decent guard gates need constructing! Let us all set to labor. Others need to break ground so that we might plant what we have to plant. Anything is better than nothing. Turnip 'n collard seed will still yet grow. Pig manure or

our own shall suffice for adequate fertilizer. Absolutely no time to waste!

The colonists commence laboring

Sara Prat: *(steps into the cabin)* I've never possessed such lacking furnishings. What on earth have we all gotten ourselves into?

Eleanor Dare: We are all here. We must make the best of our situation.

Sara Prat: I long for my oriental jewelry box back home, not to mention my jewelry. What on earth am I going to do now?

Eleanor Dare: *(snarls, narrows eyes)* Craft thy jewelry and thine own box, Sara.

Sara Prat: What from? Where be the emeralds, the ruby, and the pearls hereabouts in this place?

Eleanor Dare: Hold me back, but I beheld shells of clear white, seeds of dark crimson, and stones of dull green out on the beach, eh? Wood surrounds us!

Sara Prat: Oh, slash my throat and make me bleed, Eleanor. I'm dying to play fetch today.

Eleanor Dare: Maybe the Virginians shall be kind enough to part. They possess necklaces filled with gem-like articles, I'm sure. Thy companion just stepped inside, hello!

Marjorie Harvey: *(smiling)* All is well, what about hereabouts?

Eleanor Dare: We possess a long row to hoe, for sure.

Marjorie Harvey *(baby in arms, smiling)* I must make the best for my dear son.

Eleanor Dare: My daughter is in the crib next door. I tell thee what? We shall drop by in this home of thine, give thee assistance, and thee do the same for me, eh? Our babies can meet with one another, eh?

Marjorie Harvey: Fine with me, house mate.

Eleanor Dare: (*grabs broom and scrap cloth*) We can take this straw bundle broom and sweep the floor and knock the dust from our tables here. (*dips cloth in a wash basin*) Wipe a bit of water o'er our seats, and the place already invites improvement.

Marjorie Harvey: Wish something was around for lifting sagging spirits.

Eleanor Dare: (*grabs tin pot, opens it, takes out a handful of shredded dried leaves*) Here, the citizen of Virginia, Manteo, gave my old man some of this for doing such a thing. His people call it cassina. Works well for me. (*Places spider legged pot in fireplace, ladles water in it, drops leaves in by the heavy pinch*)

Rose Paine: Working together for the purpose of bringing each and every cabin up to standard is positive. Allow me to assist. What food be for the noon day meal?

Marjorie Harvey: A bit of dorking, a leg, a breast, a whole bird. A fish or three. Some breadcrumbs to thicken the stew. (*ladles the steaming liquid into pewter cups. Hands the cups out*)

Rose Paine: (*spots plucked bird, cuts it into pieces*) Some pulse in with this makes for a fine meal. (*drops in lentils, bird parts, bread crumbs.*)

Eleanor Dare: We have a fine six months to make the best of everything.

Marjorie Harvey: Children have so much to learn. How shall we educate them?

Eleanor Dare: We possess a few books. We have the plays, Antigone and Oedipus.

We also are in possession of Aesop's Fables. Maybe a few more, if we search.

Rose Paine: Daily living is all they truly need in the way of education. There shall be a-plenty of that for children to learn.

Marjorie Harvey: My child may desire adventure abroad. Being educated shall certainly serve him well.

Ananias Dare: My child may definitely desire more options than this place here be in possession of. Getting that education is the question.

Rose Paine: Time shall reveal all details. Who knows what information and prospects may lie unspoken of in our very midst.

Marjorie Harvey: Male children may always possess an option of going out to sea. The seas can fetch wealth, eh? Men such as Drake are always in need, and come through with the goods, seems like.

Rose Paine: Aye, missy, if one might stay out of the noose!

Ananias Dare: (*walks up to the open house door*) Eleanor, the day hasn't passed and possible biligerants were seen milling around in the woods outside the palisade today.

Eleanor Dare: Maybe they were Manteo's people. Don't be so quick to pass judgment.

Ananias Dare: Half their faces were painted black, and the other half red. Around the left eye was a white ring, around the right eye was a red one. Such be a paint for war, Manteo said.

Eleanor Dare: Well the palisade is up. Is it not?

Ananias Dare: Heading there, but not yet up everywhere it needs to be.

Eleanor dare: Don't stop until it is all up, as the potential situation demands it to be. Has the wood been sawn and split for the shed? Enough needs to be there based on the same amounts needed to make it through a long cold one in Lunnon Town.

Ananias Dare: That amount figures to five chords per cabin. That amounts to six cabins for the married people, and eight cabins for the single ones. In other words seventy five cords of wood. A cord is a stack four feet wide, six feet long, and one ax handle high. A single hardwood tree three feet in diameter by forty feet tall will give us a single chord. Two men can put down a tree and cut it up into cord wood in short order. It shall have plenty of time to dry before we need it at our greatest.

Marjorie Harvey: Well ye 'uns 'ad-better set to splittin' that wood then, and soon. In two days ye shall be finished, eh?

Ananias Dare: Give us four days. I like to spread the work out when I can.

Stage lights gradually dim. All on stage exit off

Scene 5

Four months later at the Fort Raleigh

Enter Lieutenant Governor

Lieutenant governor: We've settled into a niche. Days are flowing smoothly along.

Dyanus Harvey: Turnips and collards eat rather well. So does the wood tripe, the deer cabbage, cat tails, and the tuckahoe-roots Manteo showed us how to harvest. Such demands a billy-goat's belly to process them, however. A wild type of large root on a vine-like

bush with a white flower, makes fine eating, I've learned.

Sara Prat: Manteo was kind enough to lead a patrol to gather herbs outside the palisade, collect fish, and small game.

Marjorie Harvey: One of his own slew a stag. Times are not nearly as bad as I thought they would be.

Eleanor Dare: The children are taking notice of one another. They shall be crawling about soon.

Marjorie Harvey: I'll be glad when they can eat their own food. My milk stores are runnin' low. Gabriel almost grinds to squeeze out the final drop, I must say.

Ananias Dare: Time shall pass quickly enough. Soon John shall return.

Lieutenant governor: Not soon enough, I need to impart.

Ananias Dare: Why the serious concern all of a sudden?

Lieutenant governor: Manteo's men reported spying on Spanish troops passing through the area.

Ananias Dare: How many of them were there?

Lieutenant governor: Half a legion, I was told.

Ananias Dare: What was their position?

Lieutenant governor: Eight and one half leagues south of this position is where they made landfall, so these men claimed. The Spanish are moving, heading north west from here.

Ananias Dare: So they shall miss the colony hereabouts, eh?

Dyanus Harvey: Problem is, if they should meet up with Wanchese's crowd. He shall surely betray us all.

Lieutenant governor: We have yet to hear from him in a while now.

Dyanus Harvey: He 's out there still yet, sir. That is why I fear... He's been so quiet of late.

Ananias Dare: I sense a presence in the woods at night. I feel 'em watching us from a distance. I sense the harm some unknown person intends.

Dyanus Harvey: Half a legion is a load. Some two and a half thousand men, if I be right to say so? I doubt the patrol is so great a-number. Two hundred, maybe three at best.

Lieutenant governor: A hundred is one hundred too many, especially when their orders are to eliminate us on sight.

Dyanus Harvey: May we take Manteo at his word?

Lieutenant governor: What alternative options do we have?

Outside guard: (*races into the palisade*) Alarm! Alarm! Beware! An enemy arrow is suddenly sticking in the inside of our cabin wall.

Second outside guard: (*races through palisade area around the fort, ringing a cow bell*) To arms! To arms! Enemy arrows are sticking into the cabin walls.

Women and children race hysterically into the fortress and single large cabin.

Dyanus Harvey: Spoke too soon, eh?

Ananias Dare: At least we take cover.

Arrows rain from the sky suddenly

Manteo: Secotan markings are on the arrows.

Dyanus Harvey: Wanchese's crowd, as I intimated earlier.

Ananias Dare: All, about when everything was flowing along so smoothly. What
On earth shall we do now?

Lieutenant governor: Sit tight in one place. Two more months White shall return.

Ananias Dare: By mid February we should know something one way or another.

Lights gradually dim. All exit the stage area

Scene 6

Inside Fort Raleigh two months later

Enter Sara Prat

Sara Prat: I don't know how long we can hold out. We've had arrows raining in on
us for the past week every night. One night it was a hail of flaming
arrows. This terror is beyond any rational person's ability to cope.

Lieutenant governor: Thomas Smith was struck in the breast. So was John Burden.
It appears John might go under.

Eleanor Dare: When shall my father return? The general misery is beyond our
ability to cope.

Edward Spice: With this Virginian attack and the Spanish navios being sighted
recently at sea off our harbor to the south, only one best option

remains if one should inquire with me.

Ananias Dare: These Virginian attacks we might be able to endure, but the forthcoming Spanish attack shall most certainly overwhelm us all.

Lieutenant governor: We must put the question to the crowd.

Edward Spice: *(strikes a cowbell. Walks along throughout the palisade area)* Shall we convene? Shall we convene? Give us thy thought.

1st pikeman: White has forgotten his promise, if he remains yet alive. Maybe the seas got him, eh?

2nd pikeman: If not the leviathan of Jonah for leading us all astray!

Edward Stafford: Aye, we pray he nor his sponsor, Raleigh, isn't on the dear Queen's beheading list for failing to give her sponsors return payment plus interest!

Lieutenant governor: Our situation is the primary concern at stake. It's the end of the sixth month. In two more months it shall be planting time. We are assaulted in our immediate station on a regular basis now. Two among our best are down. White is still yet to return, with a month to spare for unexpected circumstances.

1st colonial man: Aye mate, and I got a stout boot for his hind when he does!
(stomps his left foot. Crowd chuckles)

Ananias Dare: But there be more, my jolly companions. A large and well armed Spanish patrol has been witnessed on land to our south. Let there be no doubt my saucy knaves, where it is us they intend to lay for.

Lieutenant governor: What will be our next move?

Married couples, women and children: *(screaming)* Move across the channel to

Manteo for relief, with his people!

Young single men: Nay, up the river fifty miles to Chesapeake, as we originally planned!

Lieutenant governor: Allow us to carve the bark from this live oak tree here. We shall carve Croatoan on it. Should White arrive he'll know We are on Croatoan island. We are not under duress, so we don't need a cross on it. We shall divide. Those who want to go across the channel with Manteo and move in with his crowd, begin loading up in the penance. Those going upstream fifty miles to the spot scouted out earlier, then begin loading up the flyboat. At sunrise we shall complete our loading task, then set out on our separate ways.

Several military men begin chopping off the bark from a large live oak. Another takes a chisel and commences carving once it is off. The whole word doesn't fit, so the letters CRO are carved, since the tree wouldn't allow for them to carve the entire word into the wood. A couple of men walk over toward the palisade. One with a chisel commences carving the letters CROATOAN into a square hewn post a foot and a half in diameter..

Ananias Dare: Empty the cabins and load the supplies onto the penance! This is the boat we shall take across the channel to Croatoan island. We shall divide all remaining supplies into thirds down at the store room. Since our numbers only amount to one third, then we only take one third of the supplies in storage. The other two thirds shall go away onto the flyboat with the single men.

Edward Spicer: Ye single men who shall sail upriver to Chesapeake! Commence breaking down thy cabins. Collect any utilitarian items. Disregard any bulky non utilitarian items. Armor will be one example, the six pound swivel cannon for the wagon, another. Six pound shot are more examples. Not only are these bulky and heavy, they take up much needed space. Once we all load, we shall

be gone while the leaving is still good. I am simply not sure such considerations shall remain so for much more time.

Marjorie Harvey: Ho! Maybe once ye set up, ye ‘n the boys kin drop by for a visit, eh?

Edward Spicer: I figure we shall have three years to do so. By the fourth year the toredo-worm shall have worn the bottoms of both vessels out. I’m not certain how we shall careen the ship bottom in this place.

Marjorie Harvey: (*smiles*) Well like ye do anywhere else, mi fine fellow!

Edward Spicer: If tools and supplies be plentiful. Pitch is already almost used up. No tar, no treatment.

Marjorie Harvey: Ye had ‘em before, eh? Where they be now?

Edward Spicer: Fernandez and White gathered them all up, I figure madam. We possess no scraping tools for such that may be located.

Majorie Harvey: Aye, maybe the Virginians shall possess a decent substitute.

Edward Spicer: We may try our lot with shells and whatnot, lady, but I am not holding my breath.

Marjorie Harvey: (*glances around, smiles*) The men labor in splendid orderly fashion.

Edward Spicer: We are in possession of a fine lot for a crew. I certainly feel blessed.

Marjorie Harvey: (*smile droops*) We all hate to se ye leave so.

Edward Spicer: Manteo’s people cannot absorb us all. Besides that, Manteo’s people can give the women and children immediate relief, whilst

we men strike out to construct our future residence. Later on, once our fortress has been constructed, we shall fetch all of thine to come dwell in our company.

Marjorie Spicer: How may such a-scheme ever go a-foul?

Edward Spicer: Many ways as clouds in the sky, madam. We must take all due precautions. *(sailor loads the last basket and bag filled with goods. The last hewn log boards, turns to face Marjorie)* Well, this time has thus arrived, my fair lady. I must bid adieu. My crew awaits.

Marjorie Harvey: Fare thee well good sir. Until the next sun or moon, which ere she might be first.

Edward Spicer: Fare thee well my fair lady. *(Tips hat, turns and walks toward a small boarding plank by a narrow rowboat)*

Edward Spicer boards the flyboat, then the port is pulled firmly closed. A light gust of wind causes Marjorie Harvey's hair to dance across her face. She plods back over to where the ladies and their husbands are loading the penance.

Lights gradually dim, everybody present on stage exits, curtains fall

Act 5

Scene 1

Sunrise, ships are loaded. People pass to and fro as they eat corn bread and deer jerky. Some pause occasionally to sip cups filled with hot cassina (*black tea made from dried yaupon holly*) or to take a puff of smoke on a calabash (*clay pipe*) .

Enter Lieutenant Governor

Lieutenant governor: 'Tis best that thee, the other ladies, and the children remain bunched up and sail together.

Eleanor Dare: Young men without companionship, do not mix well with females of any age or type.

Lieutenant governor: Besides a fifth of these saucy dogs being criminals recruited directly from the lowest of London gaols.

Eleanor Dare: The facts mentioned twain are reasons in and of themselves why I personally fear for that colony's future.

Lieutenant governor: Where stands the logic in that statement, my lady?

Eleanor Dare: Horn wearing stags can't be contained in a cage for life.

Lieutenant governor: Aye, (*chuckles*) a proper approach seldom invites catastrophe.

Eleanor Dare: (*glares back, pauses*) Criminals are never known for taking a proper approach to any angle of consideration.

Lieutenant governor: The arch criminals are a different breed, eh? Consider Drake, and thy Raleigh's own half brother. He 's condemned in Ireland, no doubt, but free as a bird on English soil.

Eleanor Dare: (*glares, sighs*) And suffers the same condemnation here, far as I am concerned. Surely his irrational reactions and senseless behavior is

what authored our present precarious situation amongst these Virginia's citizens.

Lieutenant governor: *(smiles confidently)* Extreme situations demand extreme solutions, my lady.

Eleanor Dare: Let there be no doubt where it was best that Edward Spicer's crowd break away and form their own enclosed retreat fifty miles up river at the least. My gut, however, renders fear for their future. Deep down the spirits are warning me of what disquieting fate awaits them all, and also as to the reason why.

Lieutenant governor: We all must remain focused on the light end of the tunnel we find ourselves thrust inside, my fair lady. *(spreads hands, palms up)* A sunshining day awaits us all!

Eleanor Dare: The idea was for this fort on Roanoke here to be a base for piracy anyway. Those bearing criminal intentions surely will serve the purpose best. Only their own gain haunts their minds loudest. It be a fortunate gift from God Almighty that we are hereabouts, moving in with Manteo's people on Croatoan, and they are moving away up river fifty miles or so.

Lieutenant governor: *(smiling intelligently, speaking in a low mysterious subtle rumble)* My fair lady, allow us to be true with one another. When the Spanish expeditionary patrol finally discovers the old fortress area, and the fact of it being stripped down, which direction do ye perceive them calculating as to our whereabouts?

Eleanor Dare: No ships are moored in the ocean nearby or the river up a ways.

Lieutenant governor: Precisely, yet evidence will abound where the fortress was once occupied and removed thither anon.

Eleanor Dare: I clearly see (*smiling*)

Lieutenant governor: It is reasonable for us to assume their first instincts will not be to seek out any whereabouts in the direction we are heading.

Eleanor Dare: (*smiling*) Our choice in direction is most definitely best for us. Father would have had it no other way.

Lieutenant governor: At least the men we do entertain in our presence, are from good stock. Very soon our supplies shall be aboard. No riff-raff abounds in our midst, my lady.

Eleanor Dare: Surely thou art most absent minded, I see. Six aged and ripened tender maiden peaches bear no bucks for their harvest.

Lieutenant governor: Was it not they of whom selected the six from our opposing set of comrades, for possible company?

Eleanor Dare: The older married ladies made the selections, possibly for their own company, should the company they presently keep ever fail them.

Lieutenant governor: Most certainly another murky situation in the mix we already possess, my lady..

Eleanor Dare: If the sorceress brew is ever stirred in such a direction.

Lieutenant governor: No doubt, these natives are blessed with freely practicing artisans of the dark craft.

Eleanor Dare: Between the local women and those ones available among our own, our six novice bucks might be in for a future treat.

Lieutenant governor: May the pie bake smoothly and well done.

Eleanor Dare: Our final comrade now boards. Awe now, if it be not my old rooster
I spy yonder, a-pushing the spent donkey up yon loading ramp!

Lieutenant governor: (*chuckles, smiling broadly*) Allow us to now make our own
way, my fair lady. The sun only sits proudly for a finite span.

Stage lights fade. Lieutenant governor and Eleanor Dare exit

Scene 2

Croatan mainland

Manteo's people wait out on the beach

*Several canoes are moving to and from transport the colonists and their supplies.
The passengers step out onto the beach and are assisted by the natives from
Hatteras Village..*

Enter 1st Pikeman

1st pikeman: (*gazing around*) Aye! A pirates cove, a pirates life, (*smiling*) days of
ease with much less strife. Here we shall abide and we all shall thrive.
Into the thousandth year shall we all survive.

1st colonial woman: (*hard glare, gazing around*) But ye forbear the lead and
forbear the whore, then ye death and sickness shall be smaller
score. We all shall dwell and labor for nourishing flavor. Our
key to living shall be a primary daily chore.

2nd colonial man: I'll second that we must cohabitate peacefully.

3rd colonial man: So our fate must be what it is.

2nd pikeman: When White returns he shall readily know where to find us.

3rd pikeman: He is already aware of our fellow colonists moving up into the Chesapeake.

1st colonial man: Most certainly he shall make his way thence first, since the plan before he left was to relocate there.

Lieutenant governor: But his daughter and grandchild be-here! Our carved note was a-mentioning of Croatoan.

2nd Pikeman: Aye, and most certainly the Spanish shall sail up the river, into the Chesapeake, and discover the anchored penance. Maybe the colony with it.

1st pikeman: If the toredo worms don't eat the poor penance first.

2nd colonial man: Surely the hull can be careened somehow out there on the River bank.

2nd colonial woman: If the people don't tear the ship down for building material first.

1st pikeman: Quickly as the worms commence a-chawing.

3rd colonial woman: Aye, (*speaks in low whispers*) mi saucy vermin. My chamber maiden stirreth water inside a black iron kettle last fat moon.

1st carpenter: Oh, and what, pray tell, did she spy?

3rd colonial woman: She stirred the dark potion to the right, then towards the left. She spoke the ancient famous goad from the great oracle at Delphi.

1st carpenter: I know not of such, yet I've heard tale.

3rd colonial woman: She beheld the world all about us. Those enraged demented Virginians soon come upon us. (*eyes widen, tranced out appearance overtakes*) We all scatter!

1st carpenter: What, might I inquire, be our forthcoming end?

3rd colonial woman: Some shall perish, some shall thrive.

1st pikeman: What about our brethren of the Chesapeake?

3rd colonial woman: They anticipate the Spanish discovering the flyboat's mooring. They move upon land to deceive searchers arising up from the beach, locating the colony in clandestine position. Zigzag trenches tactfully abound, thus their position shall still remain sound.

2nd pikeman: Well my lady, do the Spanish find this colony?

3rd colonial woman: (*wide eyes, wild demeanor*) Aye, they shell the flyboat, setting it aflame! Though they search out the colony, it remains veiled from view and their search be in vain.

1st carpenter: Toward where does time walk for us all?

3rd colonial woman: In the sixteenth year thence, the colony is consumed in flame and smoke. We saw ripped and torn bodies scattered. Many arrow shafts on this date are seen sticking up from the earth and out from the walls.

Lieutenant governor: Aye! On what charge, my dear seeker of the unseen and yet to come?

3rd colonial woman: The young men's lust for women. Like sly foxes they slough along the river banks adjacent to the Virginia villages at dawn and late evening. They move to seize bathers and laundry

cleaners! These young women gratify the urges of the flesh
for our brethren of the Chesapeake.

Ananias Dare: One third truly hail from the lowest in London society, fresh out the
gaols. I can see this possibly.

3rd colonial woman: Aye, but wait, there be more tales to speak of. These very
young Virginia maidens are ashamed, withholding this fact of
their experience. Many are with child, however. When their
children are born, their secrets are thus revealed!

1st pikeman: Every father's ire and terror.

3rd colonial women: When hard pressed these maidens tell their tales of woe and
brutality. From thus the Virginian's rage shall ensue.

Ananias Dare: At times people never learn. This fact amazes me.

3rd colonial women: Wait, pray tell my mates! More horrors worse than these
mentioned shall motivate this rage of these Virginians against
our brethren. A cruel and merciless famine shall blanket this
colony of Chesapeake. These same delicate maidens and
sometimes even their babes, are reduced into table fare for all
our brethren., a-roasted in pits as the Spanish do pork! From
Thus and these violations, ensues this renewed rage of these
Virginians now found in distant precincts.

Ananias Dare: (*sighs, glares around*) So what becomes of them?

3rd colonial woman: Ole King Packwok strikes, a-burning the village and
mercilessly slaughtering every last one. Nothing; no ship, no
colony, no palisades, save only dry bones, wood scrap, glass
inside the earth and twisted fragments of rusty metal, shall
remain of them. One day, she informs me, in a far distant
age, where strange accommodations surround the entire area,

the ship's anchor lying in the river harbor shall be discovered,
revealing truth in this unshakable tale she now spins.

Eleanor Dare: I shudder to inquire of father's return.

3rd colonial woman: Lasse', be glad ye kissed him adieu.

*The colonists mill past to and fro the canoes along the beach and Hatteras Village.
The Virginians amble along to and fro in their company, transporting personal
items.*

Eleanor Dare: (*drops her head*) We have reached the end of our sixth month
abroad. A sinking sensation grips my gut. What might have
transpired to stymie his passage? Was he captured by the Spanish?
Surely I sense the Spanish are somehow to blame. Deep down I long
to be back home.

1st pikeman: I sense we have arrived at our home. Such, and our experiences thus,
may be all that we are destined to ever know.

Eleanor Dare: (*sighs deeply*) Don't speak in such encouraging tones. We all shall
bide our time hither. All shall be well, though our clothing and fare
differs greatly from that which we knew once. My daughter shall
raise up, never knowing of any difference, as are all these other
children.

2nd colonial woman: (*speaks suddenly from behind*) Unless thy father should
return on the morrow, lasse'.

Eleanor Dare: (*sighs deeply*) At least I have my dear husband, come what may.
Unless my father should return on the morrow.

2nd colonial woman: Should a woman ensure life in a daily wonder? What
monstrous torture has she convinced herself to endure? Shall
a single day's wonderment bring what is unknown a month

closer to being known? Shall an entire night of anguish
move that which remains yet unknown even a week closer to
reality. Shall three days of anguish and nightly toil in
wonderment render even a single hour long lost in eternity,
back into relevance?

1st colonial woman: Never!, cries the nymph from the meadow herb-field in yon
woods.

2nd colonial woman: (*glances over toward Eleanor Dare*) So why even a moment
thus spent wasting precious creative energy, my dear lady,
when time neither slows, speeds, nor changes course?

Stage lights gradually fade out. All on stage now exit.

Scene 3
Hatteras Village

Thursday, sunshine, August 18, 1590

Enter Virginia Dare

Virginia Dare: (*tugs at her Eleanor Dare's worn fading dress*) Mother, what are we
gonna do today?

Eleanor Dare: We have work to do. A festival is soon to occur on the outside.

Virginia Dare: What festival, Mother? (*tugs on Eleanor Dare's dress*) What festival
is it?

Eleanor Dare: 'Tis the squash and bean festival, Virginia.

Virginia Dare: How come I wear these clothes (*tugging at her hide blouse*) and ye wear thine here?

Eleanor Dare: 'Tis all I have left to remind me of home, daughter.

Virginia Dare: Gabriel and his whole family wear clothes like mine, Mother. How come ye wear those old things?

Eleanor Dare: Daughter, we come from a far away land. We are ruled by kings and queens who live in huge fancy palaces, and are served by elves and waiting girls donned in green, pink, and red socks, and smocks with shiny golden bells on elegant taleses. This old worn out, faded dress, child, is all that I have left from that place.

Virginia Dare: Then please inform me dear mother, what on earth are we doing here?

Eleanor Dare: (*sighs*) Thy father was a building contractor, who built fancy brick structures and sold tile. He thought we could do better in life to come here.

Virginia Dare: Is this better Mother? I've heard so much good talk about this place, merry England.

Eleanor Dare: This isn't what we planned. We were supposed to go to Chesapeake, but the pilot, Simon Fernandez, suddenly had other plans on the final moment. He dumps all of us out over on Roanoke island, across yon channel.

Virginia Dare: (*sighs*) I still don't understand, mother. Why are we here?

Eleanor Dare: Our lieutenant governor and others, including thy father, decided it was best for the colony to divide. All the married people and older people go over here with Manteo and his people, and the other,

younger single people go up into Chesapeake.

Virginia Dare: Oh, (*sad look*) but father doesn't like it here.

Eleanor Dare: Thy grandfather left back to merry England for supplies. He promised to arrive in six months, but he hasn't even yet.

Virginia Dare: Why not, Mother?

Eleanor Dare: We don't know. Maybe the Spanish sank his ship. See this old notebook I discovered on board the ship the other day, daughter?

Virginia Dare: Yes Mother. Why do ye need that?

Eleanor Dare: When he does come, he'll want to know of our experiences in this place. I'm making a record of it. If I'm not around, then ye can hand it to 'im when he does arrive.

Virginia Dare: What is his name?

Eleanor Dare: John White. He 's governor of Virginia, what our people call this land.

Virginia Dare: (*sad look, sighs*) I don't want to leave, Mother. Gabriel and his mother and father are going to the dance area. (*face brightens*) I hear the drums beating now! Are ye and father going out today?

Eleanor Dare: I'll remain inside whilst thy father is away. Ye may go on with Gabriel and his parents. I'm going to write for a while and stir up some dinner in this pot on the fire.

Virginia Dare: They are a-cookin' food at the dance area mother. See outside the door? All the other English are gonna be there, Gabriel said. 'Twill be fun!

Eleanor Dare: *(smiles)* See if Gabriel's mother and father are ready to go. Go with them, if so.

Virginia Dare exists. Ananias Dare enters

Ananias Dare: Where be the girl, woman?

Eleanor Dare: Out in the dance area with Gabriel and his parents.

Ananias Dare: *(chuckles)* Children adapt so well. Only us adults struggle.

Eleanor Dare: Looks like this be home. Certainly it's all her or the others her age, have ever known.

Ananias Dare: Some of the people saw faint firelight comin' from Roanoke in the eastern distance last night. A few say they heard trumpet blasts from the same direction in the stillness of the night. One of our men claims he heard faint sounds of trumpet songs he recognized, but everybody among our own laughs at him.

Eleanor Dare: So why isn't anybody investigating this matter?

Ananias Dare: Several of Manteo's people canoe over yonder in the darkness. When they returned this morning late, they say they found fresh boot tracks where a new campfire was struck. But nothing else, other than that.

Eleanor Dare: *(excited)* Well these people here don't wear boots or play trumpets. We must take a trip ourselves to this island.

Ananias Dare: Nothing else was found. Manteo's people combed the beaches and island well overnight.

Eleanor Dare: I refuse to believe we were not left with some kind of sign. This is a big deal. I mean, if my father could only see his three year old

granddaughter now!

Ananias Dare: Well Eleanor..., these local men combed the island from end to end, side to side. Yes, they did so throughout the darkness of night, but these people can see just as well either way. I'm amazed by their adept skills and abilities to travel.

Eleanor Dare: But, indeed, they missed something!

Ananias Dare: And one more detail, dear. These people do make trumpets from large conch shells they find along the beach somewhere. I hear them sound all around in the distant woods. No, I haven't seen any such shells around in these parts. They get them from some beach somewhere, if not in trade from people who dwell in these types of places where these huge shells are found out on the beach.

Eleanor Dare: (*gazes out across the beach toward Roanank, sheds a tear*) Oh, if father could only see, the glorious beauty found today in his child and the one who was inside me. When he left this boundless land of trees, making his way across that vast surging sea, if he could only return he simply would never believe.

The way she plays and so freely roams about. Aye, the way she smiles and is so helpful around the house. See how she interacts so cheerfully in this strange land abroad, 'ere I say, indeed we all have so many friends without! Today she put on her Virginia dress. She walks about with new pride. She struts around here elegantly in our new nest! I wish he could see how splendidly all of us have passed the ultimate test.

Stage lights fade out gradually. Ananias Dare, Eleanor Dare, Virginia Dare exit

Scene 4

*Saturday, April 1st, 1595
Sunny morning in Hatteras Village*

The children born in the first year of the colonist's stay at Hatteras Village are out in the dance area, and are seven to eight years old. Eight year old Virginia Dare is almost always in the company of Gabriel Havey, who is the same age. The Lieutenant governor and his assistants gather around the native chieftain, his assistants, and his twelve prophets inside the tribal council building while the children play outside.

Enter Manteo

Manteo: *(faces the native elders)* Keen teek no-lay platinum. Bor you bon tay, E-too-loo-too-too! *(faces the colonists)* Greetings gentlemen. Welcome one, welcome all, here on this day of festival excellence! *(faces the native elders)* Noo-noo-prank en ta porsanium. Keen tuck poke 'em pro-tay bell-a-tassium. *(faces the colonists)* On this day we are all gathered for the purpose of planning our time and that of our future choices.

1st pikeman: How, how are they going to know of the future and how we might plan our next course of events?

Manteo: Our prophets are knowledgeable in their methodology. They know the realm of the past, the present, and that which is to come.

Ananias Dare: Sirrah, their prophets never yet are known to fail.

1st pikeman: But I am not ignorant of these matters in general, sir, I simply have yet to see.

1st prophet: *(squats, stirring in the glowing hearth coals with a hickory stick.*

Gazes upward squinting his eyes) Eeny por-tu notre fantasm! Awashe!
Scrashe! Bensha! *(he casts clear liquid into the flames, causing them
to explode)* Koo poo loo bra hoo! Tick tang land dang boo too!

Manteo: Our prophets say the Sisspahaw traders bear gifts, tokens, and valuable secrets. They bear messages from the Chickasaw to the west.

1st pikeman: Speak to us of the these secrets Manteo! What secrets!

Manteo: He says in nine days a herald shall be given to the Chickasaw people.

1st pikeman: What type of herald, Manteo?

Manteo: A precursor to a much larger herald that shall cause the sun to darken fifteen days later.

Dyonis Harvey: *(gazes around)* Have we all commenced an embrace of rubbish here, my fellow comrades?

Ananias Dare: What is the meaning in it?

1st prophet: What if one half should disagree?

Manteo: The portend is one of a pending judgment in blood. The sun darkening orb moveth o'er nine of our most bitter enemies, then pauses where the river beyond forks at the Chesapeake. We've embraced wickedness, so therefore wickedness shall be unleashed to engulf our own.

Ananias Dare: Who are our enemies? How shall the blood be released?

Manteo: *(faces the prophets gathered around the hearthfire in the lodge)* May yong ting teen parsie bartruum?

2nd prophet: *(arises from his squat beside the fire, wild eyes, angry)* Do em pue ray proto coto boora parsay!

Manteo: (*faces the colonists*) I asked how shall the blood be spilled and who are our enemies. The replies were that thou are the enemies of the world around us. Wanchese delivered a message by a young accolade warrior runner the day before yesterday. His message was intended for me. He says my days are finished for being both a traitor to my land and my people. When the sky shall darken o'er the land of the Chickasaw, our days are finished, unless these words of wisdom from the spirits are heeded.

1st pikeman: What shall be done? What address shall we make?

Manteo: We shall divide up. There be twelve villages among our people. These villages are scattered amongst the woods throughout the Croatoan territorial realm. All of ye are to divide up betwixt these twelve villages. He who chooses to remain here, does so at his own peril. The village of Hatteras here is the chief village or the Council Village. Each of the twelve prophets is a spiritual leader o'er a single village. All of us shall divide up and follow our assigned spiritual leader. He who decides to remain here, does so at his own jeopardy, when the final moment arrives.

Dyonis Harvey: Rubbish! I don't want to go anywhere.

Ananias Dare: We are exiting out with whoever we are assigned to. Thou art coming along with us, Dyonis. I don't care to have our poor children's hearts broken by us parting in our ways.

Dyonis Harvey: (*gazing around, snarls*) This logic around herabouts borders on the ridiculous.

Ananias Dare: I don't know how they know what they do, but most of the time they are right. I am not taking any chances with my children. Besides that, Virginia and Gabriel have begun taking instruction in literature. I still hope to make it home one day.

3rd prophet: (*glares hard at Dyonis Harvey and Ananias Dare*) Ninka Nika pooradorum. Nooka nooka plooka dooka!

Dyonis Harvey: (*glares at Ananias Dare*) Whence lies the direction in this?

Ananias Dare: 'Tis something about us going somewhere with somebody specifically. I gather that much.

Manteo: Both of thee and thy families shall follow the prophet in league with the bear clan. The village they preside o'er is some fourteen and a half leagues northwest of this place.

Ananias Dare: Who are their competitors?

Manteo: The clan of warriors is headed by none other than Wahunsenacawh, a young but powerful buck, rising quickly in alliances and confederation. When he transitioned into the status of warrior, no man ever endured a more trying huskanaw than he. He possesses nine wives and forty five children, two thirds of which are sons. He has counted coup on more than one hundred of the enemy. He owns everything to the east, running northbound as far as the Chesapeake extends. He doesn't yet own the lands where the bear clan dominates. The Croatoan remain on negotiable terms, however.

Ananias Dare: (*sighs, gasps*) This word means this leader so described owns the land where Edward Spicer transported the others into. We have yet to hear from them, to my own astonishment.

Manteo: Our prophets maintain watch by the fires at night and by the light of the moon, and inside deep wood pools. The group of Englishmen thee speaketh of, have consorted with a number of women in the village of Pusquameck, northward near the hills by the sea. Most of this consortium is by willing negotiation between the Englishmen and the young women in question. Some is not, however. One of these women so

wronged was a squaw known far and wide for her extraordinary beauty, owned by the great warrior himself. Luckily for the English she had fallen out of favor by the chief, being also known for her great tendencies to be disloyal, especially in the face of gratuitous gain.

1st pikeman: Should we not warn them of their treachery?

Manteo: The leadership has warned them already. The young men are very rebellious and belligerent. Surely their day of retribution shall arrive, and soon.

Heavy drum beats commence outside the council lodge. Flutes play and much chanting is heard. The village citizens congregate on the outside before the centralized council lodge. The twelve prophets and the chief steps before the gathering crowd. The chief raises both hands.

Chief: Keen Sa ka noonka! Beeling sin sing mooka doonka pooley. Pooling dooley doon platoon a boo long. Nor too roo sin shoo doonka!

The gathered crowd: Cheers, whoops, speaks in a loud murmur.

Chief (*raises both hands*) crowd silences. Noonka doonka plunka bor cuaim! Neenta boolan stroble roo land. Rambo lowbo tin tinka timbo? Neenka neenka stroble! No silembo robo tuto.

The gathered crowd: *Murmurs, divides into fragments of thirty people, each group aligning with the assigned prophet. Ananias Dare and Dyonis Harvey and their families merge among the thirty behind the prophet leader of the bear clan. The English bid their goodbyes among themselves as they part and join the differing alliances among the different clans.*

Virginia Dare: (*faces Gabriel Harvey*) At least we have one another.

Gabriel Harvey: There are two other English couples and their two children.
Twelve is all one clan will accept of us English people, however.

Virginia Dare: Who remains hereabouts?

Gabriel Harvey: The third pikeman, the grenadier, the second bowman, three of the swordsmen. Two married couples and their children are, I think I heard it said. The plan here is to set a trap for the coming attackers.

Virginia Dare: Is there powder and lead remaining with us?

Gabriel Harvey: None. The matchlocks have all been converted into crossbows, so father has told me. He tells me these crossbows shoot almost as well as the matchlock did, and without any of the noise.

Virginia Dare: I love our studies of literature and mathematics. I enjoy reading Chaucer's Tales of Canterbury, and Donte's Paradise Lost. I enjoy Writing in English, as does my mother.

Gabriel Harvey: Once we settle into our new home, maybe we can resume our studies.

Virginia Dare: *(smiles)* I look forward to the day.

Gabriel Harvey: I know the language of the Croatoan. I designed my own alphabet for this language based on that of Harris. Want a-see it?

Virginia Dare: Yeah! When we are finally moved into our new home with the Bear Clan.

Ananias Dare: What clan is remaining in place here?

Manteo: Clan of the Alligator. The alligator lays in wait for his prey. It may be sunny now, but the skies shall darken very soon. The winds are already commencing to stir. We all must disperse and head out. The alliance

moving in-toward our village here be a multi-village alliance hailing from Roanoke island. Many gather from the northern and southern ends of the island even as we speak. Our prophets see all and know all. The spirits never mislead.

The entire village disperses into groups of thirty led by a prophet from the village he is heading toward. The English colonists fragment into groups of twelve, with five merging into a different group. The sky darkens as the groups ease along into separate directions. Thunder rolls.

Stage lights gradually dim. Manteo, Ananias Dare, Virginia Dare, Gabriel Harvey, 1st pikeman, the chief, the gathered crowd, 2nd pikeman, 3rd prophet, 1st prophet, 2nd prophet exit stage.

Scene 5

Sunday, April 9th, 1600

Pamlico Village fifty miles northwest of Hatteras

Enter Virginia Dare, Eleanor Dare

Virginia Dare: Life here is good, mother, but I can't help but wonder. We read the Canterbury tales and the stories of Thomas Becket, and all about the Apostle Paul and his travels. Things have indeed changed, but I wonder how.

Eleanor Dare: We are lucky to be here, decently fed, alive and healthy. The village of Hatteras, from whence we made exit prior when thou wert a small child, was attacked. Everybody was slaughtered outright, including the English residing with them.

Virginia Dare: The Virginian god of war. Keraunos, reigns hereabouts. A number

of the neighboring villages have been attacked. I am in fear walking toward the stream outback to do laundry.

Gabriel Harvey: Walk with me to the central dance area. The honeysuckle festival will soon be in progress. There be much to discuss with our neighbors. We all must decide where our future resides.

Virginia Dare: Sure, let's walk. We can hear the news for ourselves around here. Mother and father seem to enjoy being more around home these days.

Gabriel Harvey: They are nearing elder age. We shall be there one day.

Virginia Dare: I wonder what is happening abroad. Nobody knows anything.

Gabriel Harvey: (*whispers audibly*) I heard a rumor the other day.

Virginia Dare: What was the word?

Gabriel Harvey: An English boat was blown off course. 'Twas headed far northward, to a colony beyond. The boat crashed into the beach here, upon the sand banks out beyond.

Virginia Dare: How many aboard it?

Gabriel Harvey: Maybe forty.

Virginia Dare: So what was the word?

Gabriel Harvey: They claim more scouts were surveying the banks into the Chesapeake, not far from here.

Virginia Dare: Another colony, am I to take it?

Gabriel Harvey: (*smiles*) That's correct. Another colony is being planned, so it all

appears.

Virginia Dare: Maybe grandfather shall be a part of this new effort. I can't wait to meet with him. I've heard so much about him.

Gabriel Harvey: I would like to know why he stopped searching for us. It's almost as if he simply dumped us off at the first beach he arrived at. The plan must have been to abandon us from the beginning.

Virginia Dare: Mother says she hopes he still lives at all. No word from him or the others, whatsoever.

Gabriel Harvey: Appears like it's us two, and the family we have. *(smiles, holds her left hand)*

Virginia Dare: *(glances toward Gabriel, smiles)* Here we are at the dance area. The drums are already throbbing. See the boys and girls forming couples, holding hands as we are? They are cheerful, as we should be. They and ourselves live today. Allow us all to make the best of It.

Gabriel Harvey: The faces of the seven gods of destiny on the poles roundabout, are smiling at us. Behold 'em all yonder?

Virginia Dare: *(gazes off into the distance, squinting in the rising sun)* I do see them. They do appear to smile down at us!

Natives encircle around the posts with the faces of the gods on them in the dance area. Heavy drum beats commence throbbing in perfect rhythm.

Dance leader: Nee nee twitch bee a-nee! Kin too too lou doo.

Gabriel Harvey: Girls circle to the left.

Virginia Dare: Boys circle to the right.

Gabriel Harvey: Here we go now. Here we go. Where too? Now we don't know!

Virginia Dare: I love the story the lead girl tells when she walks into the center of our circle here.

Gabriel Harvey: Of a girl and boy who meet.

Virginia Dare: But are from rival villages.

Gabriel Harvey: So their parents never approve.

Virginia Dare: (*gazes toward Gabriel Harvey*) So they elope, of course! (*as she dances to the drum beat in a circle around Gabriel*)

Gabriel Harvey: What happened in the crystal mountain waterfalls? (*dances in a circle around Virginia to the drum beats*)

Virginia Dare: (*smiling, dancing cross-armed in circles with Gabriel*) Ooh, how they embrace!

Gabriel Harvey: (*smiling, dancing cross-armed in circles*) And we all dance to give personality to the highlights in this ancient tale of woe!

Virginia Dare: Oh, how beautiful 'tis when the lead bard and dancer abruptly pause! See how beautiful her face shines in the sunlight. Behold the elegance of soft doeskin dress and many strings of glittering pearl necklaces.

Gabriel Harvey: She pauses as she sings the tale of them staying out all night in fear of going home. She also sings of how their parents forbade them to visit. The dance is commencing. The energy is growing.

Virginia Dare: (*smiles, slings her head, glares at Gabriel*) Oh, how the passion is enduring! (*she moves to the increasing beat*)

The large kettle drums commence to rumble. The turtle shell rattles shake

Gabriel Harvey: How it rains. How the lightning flashes. How the rolling thunder rumbles.

Virginia Dare: How they both so dread the light of the rising sun. May the spirits remember this tale for all time forward. (*begins to slowly dance in a circle around the poles, in and out, with the others*)

Gabriel Harvey: (*glares backwards toward Virginia as he dances*) So, rather than travel back home where their intense passion is forever forbidden...

Virginia Dare: They both leap down the thousand foot high falls, into a clear all natural sapphire gem-pool below.

The large kettle drums rumble uncontrollably as the dancers dance in skipping circles and scream like innocent maiden spirits in distress.

Gabriel Harvey: That's a true story, so I am told. It happened to the north west of here forty miles or so away.

Virginia Dare: It's such a beautiful story, Grbriel, and the dance going with it to emphasize the sensations, the occurrences, and the passion, is utterly astonishing as it is breathtaking.

Gabriel Harvey: I hope it never fades, nor the dance.

Virginia Dare: Oh, it's not. I'm writing it all down in my mother's account of our lives after my grandfather left across the water for England.

Gabriel Harvey: That shall be most valuable to somebody one day in a far flung future time.

Virginia Dare: Many shall long to know the truth, as I am sure they already are.

Gabriel Harvey: 'Tis strange how we both never knew England.

Virginia Dare: We were born here, not over there.

Gabriel Harvey: Our story shall never die, Virginia.

Virginia Dare: Not if I can help it.

Gabriel Harvey: The bonfire is burning well now.

Virginia Dare: The food shall soon be on.

Gabriel Harvey: I'm hungry as a howling wolf myself.

Virginia Dare: Dancing gets one that way!

Gabriel Harvey: Let's make it there in line before the warrior acolytes commence
dipping the soup!

*Stage lights gradually fade out. Gabriel Harvey, Virginia Dare, and the natives,
exit.*

Scene 1
March 1, 1604

Pamlico Village
Near the council lodge

Enter Scipio

Scipio; (*racing in from the surrounding woods, speaking his native tongue*) Our scout patrol bears the latest news.

Manteo: What news? What dark panther is on the prowl?

Scipio: The English village at Chesapeake was massacred.

Manteo: By Wanchese and his Roanoak alliances?

Scipio: No, by the powerful one the English know as Powhatton.

Manteo: Such be the name of his grand tribal confederacy.

Scipio: (*hangs his head*) They all were murdered to the last man. Their supplies were looted. Much booty was taken.

Manteo: On what grounds?

Scipio: Violation of the chief's young women. Even the chief's daughter was taken advantage of.

Manteo: (*puzzled expression*) Without any exchange for the carnal accommodations?

Scipio: There was an exchange in most cases, but the children resulting from these conversations were ignored, until it became an outright burden for the

village to care for. A tax beyond one's abilities to gratify. Therefore any exchange for favors was rendered by tribal council as a carnal violation.

Manteo: What about the ship these colonists sailed there in?

Scipio: The Spanish sunk that ship many years ago, not long after that colony was established. These colonists, who bore no access to female affection, attracted the ire of the Powhatton men.

Manteo: What about these women? How do they feel?

Scipio: The women are infatuated by these moon-faced men. These men throw very attractive papoose to these women in need, so they claim. Many English have taken them as wives. The men of the village view them as arrogant and very self-centered.

Manteo: This could provoke an attack. My intuition informs me that more was at stake here, however, than carnal violations.

Scipio: Starvation set in due to this long standing drought. This drought commenced some three years prior to the colony's establishment. During these final years young girls would often walk out to the stream for morning laundry, collecting berries, and fish from our wares. Often they ne'er return.

Manteo: What was made of it?

Scipio: Women who married these wicked English saw the fresh bones of young females near their cooking pots. These pots were filled with fresh meat and stolen corn. Later on this news and that which was to come, proved to be more than could be tolerated.

Manteo: My word! (*gasps*) What be the nature of these people?

Scipio: Yeah, and ye, thyself, stands at the top of a growing target list.

Manteo: I shall inform Annanias immediately.

Scipio: Dividing into small groups and merging with dominant established scattered villages was certainly best for us and these English visitors.

Manteo: I shall carry the word.

Scipio: Excellent! Happy travels.

Manteo: Good night and happy slumber.

Scipio exits

Ananias Dare: (*walks up from the dance area*) How now Manteo?

Manteo: Troubling news.

Ananias Dare: Life is difficult.

Manteo: Thy brethren in Chesapeake were all slain to the last man.

Ananias Dare: What source offered this information?

Manteo: Scipio, head scout for our tribal patrol.

Ananias Dare: Who informed him?

Manteo: Why, he was witness to the tragedy in progress, from what I could gather.

Ananias Dare: The village sorceress witnessed this event many years ago in water standing in her wash pot. Did this scout say why?

Manteo: Improprieties with the ladies among the confederation of the one thy people know as Powhatton.

Ananias Dare: (*sighs, shakes his head*) We were all forewarned. So now it's only our scattered crowds among the Croatoan villages?

Manteo: Besides an occasional storm blown ship-full crashing upon our banks and golden shores hereabouts.

Ananias Dare: Does it happen often?

Manteo: Four have happened here since the days of thine own colony, according to our scouts. Through the years various sightings of strange bearded moon faced men have been reported as being lost in the woods. Most often, 'twas the Spanish who were sighted, but not always.

Ananias Dare: It was a portend to the worst, I will suppose.

Manteo: To the south, outward from the place the Spanish know as San Miguel de Guadalupe, entire villages often fall dead after the passing of a single Spanish patrol. It's almost as if the spirits are angered for some reason, at the people of the land.

Ananias Dare: Yes, the Spanish have been among us for years. Their tremendous greed prevents their success.

Manteo: Shall the English learn and observe?

Ananias Dare: Time shall surely reveal all future secrets.

Manteo: Does the past portend a pleasant future thus far?

Ananias Dare: (*shrugs*) Maybe since my people hath mingled with thine, situations shall improve.

Manteo: If we all can remain alive to tell about it?

Ananias Dare: Our fragmented group lives on.

Manteo: Warriors from Roanoke allied with Wanchese, have already attacked three villages, slaughtering all they could find, especially the English. Maybe time shall reveal all secrets laying in waiting. I believe they trail me and taste my blood as much as that of the English.

Ananias Dare: The new babies born shall replace the ones of us who die. Us English are in possession of a healthy birth rate.

Manteo: A valuable possession to hold in our day.

Ananias Dare: Spells the difference between life and death.

Ananias Dare, Manteo exit stage

Scene 2

Sunrise, inside Ananias Dare's cabin

Knock at the door

Enter Virginia Dare

Virginia Dare: (*arises and opens the door*) Oh, my word! Fancy spying thee so early. What's it, my love?

Gabriel Harvey:: Where be thy parents?

Virginia Dare: Away at the sunrise dance. The Moon of Spring bears so much of vast importance to celebrate with its arrival.

Gabriel Harvey: Let us walk a bit. The central hearth outside is being prepared for a morning feast in honor of spring. We all pray for a bountiful planting time and harvest in the fall.

Virginia Dare: I'm preparing a mess of cassina in that old Spanish teapot Tintilia bought to me.

Gabriel Harvey: From where did this teapot come?

Virginia Dare: Some attack on a Spanish patrol farther inland. Her father's brother is a war chief.

Gabriel Harvey: Maybe these were the Spanish who attacked our colonial brethren earlier on, and they deserved what they got.

Virginia Dare: They deserved it. (*snickers*) This is Croatoan territory all hereabouts. Come on inside, if ye will.

Gabriel Harvey: (*steps inside*) 'Tis a fine day. The red birds are singing, the butterflies a-fluttering, the rabbits a-hoppin', a new fawn a hobblin' along, I noticed in my walk hither.

Virginia Dare: I saw some sugar pitcher's a-blooming, with that sweet smell the other day. (*smiles*) I know where a peat bog is filled with new fly traps and some great big old ones.

Gabriel Harvey: (*pauses, bites his bottom lip*) My father has some Spanish cane-ya he bought from a neighboring village where our fellow brethren are. I found a big salt lick by the creek not far from the village here.

Virginia Dare: (*puzzled look*) What does that have to do with the price of beer and wine in England?

Gabriel Harvey: (*smiles, sinks down upon his left knee*) Will ye marry me, Virginia?

Virginia Dare: (*astonished*) Well, now! We haven't even romped, as the word hereabouts all around is for it. Most of these squaws know who can maintain their pace anywhere around by the time they are thirteen. I never cared to learn, personally. I had some offers though, fellow, let me tell ya in earnest! (*sighs, smiles*) The entire idea of the initiating motion utterly detests me, but I honestly adore the idea of children, Gabe.

Gabriel Harvey: I don't care, Virginia! (*pause, silence*) Will ye marry me mi love?

Virginia Dare: Well, I want a bowl of salt a week and a pint of El Caneya a month. Father 'll want one of the same, and so might the chief, I don't know.

Gabriel Harvey: It's on. (*smiles, happy*) I can make that!

Virginia Dare: We shall plan this thing out right. Let's walk along and talk about it first thing here.

The two commence walking toward the central congregation area in the village.

Gabriel Harvey: I want to wear my best loin cloth, my shell bead and tassel decorated deer skin shirt.

Virginia Dare: Yeah, and I'll wear my crimson and purple painted deer skin dress with the multicolored shell beads and the leather tassels hanging at the base. I have coon skin moccasins decorated with multicolored shell beads and tassels that I wear only on special occasions. I'm wearing those as well.

Gabriel Harvey: I've worn mine here and there. Maybe my rawhide buckskin pants and the deer skin shirt would look better. What are thy feelings, my love?

Virginia Dare: Well, here at the dance area, let's have large kettle drums setting our bass rhythm. To the left we can have the girls with the turtle shell rattles. Maybe to the right we could have the smaller gourd rattles. What be thy thoughts on this matter?

Gabriel Harvey: These abandoned Spanish settlements to the south render much we have scrounged. Our warriors have discovered these instruments the Spanish call kithara. A couple of lyre and harps have been found and salvaged. Our people have been able to reproduce these kithara from sticks, rawhide strings, and gourds. I want the harps on the upside here, and these stringed instruments on the starboard side of the dance area, slightly back a bit in the distance. Oh, and I almost forgot this. *(hands Virginia a necklace of blue, white, and green beads beside polished bear claws and bored out fossilized shark teeth)*

Virginia Dare: *(accepts the necklace)* I'm so grateful, Gabriel. *(grasps his breast)* I know mother shall desire for us to have an English wedding, but this is all we really know.

Gabriel Dare: Don't look, but here comes our parents now.

Eleanor Dare: How now with ye two?

Virginia Dare: *(walks up)* Fine, and soon to be wedded. Look! *(proudly displays the necklace)*

Ananias Dare: *(smiles)* 'Tis the right thing, my dearest Virginia.

Virginia Dare: He's offering a dowry, if it be fine with ye both.

Ananias Dare: What dowry?

Virginia Dare: A bowl of salt a week and a pint of Spanish El Caneya a month.

Eleanor Dare: Save that for the chief. We do not have a fee, but he certainty shall.
He shall surely value the liquor o'er the salt, I'll wager. Manteo I'm
Sure, 'll be happy to address him on our behalf.

Virginia Dare: Manteo can be our best man.

Manteo: (*walks up from the cabins*) Something 's a stir. A pledge? A fee, I hear
spoken of?

Marjorie Harvey: My son 's soon to be married.

Manteo: (*smiles*) Married? (*gazes around*) Aye!

Virginia Dare: Wouldst thou be so kind as to speak with the chief on our behalf.

Manteo: No problem. The chief is in now. (*walks away*)

Dyonis Harvey: Well we desire the best of meat for this wedding. We need
venison, bear, and turkey. That ground up harmony corn we want
served out in abundance. We can't have too much corn bread and
venison gravy filled with salted roasted pecans, black walnuts, and
freshly made acorn biscuits. .

Virginia Dare: Let us spare not the wood and rock tripe, ramps, the deer mustard
and creek-cabbage. Beans and squash shall be excellent additions.

Marjorie Harvey: Some of the collard greens grown from the seeds we saved from
The ship canteen would be fine.

Virginia Dare: Don't let us forget the citron melons grown from the seeds we found

in the old ship canteen before we finally dismantled it for lumber. When cooked up in wild honey they make for some fine dessert victuals!

Dyonis Harvey: Now I know how we have turnips and beets growing in our gardens around here. All of this sure compliments the squash, corn, and these red n' speckled beans they grow 'round here. It's almost like it was all meant to be.

Manteo: (*walks up, smiling*) The chief has no problem with our ceremony. The others all desire a place for participation. His fee is a pint of liquor a month, if possible. A half bowl of fresh salt 'll work when the liquor is not possible to come by. When is this ceremony planned?

Virginia Dare: (*smiles*) Day after tomorrow.

Maneo: Allow me to notify the others. We can all get hopping on this matter. The primary barn holds an abundance of extra victuals.

Manteo, Virginia Dare, Marjorie Harvey, Dyonis Harvey, Gabriel Harvey, Ananias Dare, Eleanor Dare, exit

Scene 3

Evening two days later

The congregational area at the village center

Bonfire cracks while a huge pot cooks a soup of venison, squash, beans, corn, and onions. Several turkeys roast on spits around the large fire. Drums beat, rattles shake, stringed instruments strum. Dancers, English and native, female and male, weave in and out among the nine poles arranged in a twelve foot diameter circle with frightful faces carved into the standing end. Virginia Dare and Gabriel Harvey are positioned in the center with their right and left wrists bound in

crimson ribbon. Manteo stands on the opposite side of them. Their parents stand on the other. A pole with a frightful smiling face upon it stands proudly in the center before the couple.

Enter Gabriel Harvey

Gabriel Harvey: I've been to many a-wedding growing up around here, but surely it feels different being the center of the show.

Ananias Dare: This is a huge event. Surely it represents an inter-marriage of cultures twain.

Marjorie Harvey: Let us call it the new culture of Virginia.

Gabriel Harvey: I know very little of English marriage customs. This is all I know.

Virginia Dare: *(smiles, gazes around)* Much cassina quaffed from gourd bowls, much Spanish El Caneya, too much calabash smoke, a bit of leaf chew, hither an' tither.

Gabriel Harvey: Golden leaf chew with all thy might whilst ye sit, spit spit spit!
Casina drink, cassina drink 'til the dark of night, shite, shite, shite!

Virginia Dare: Rattles on our ankles, bells upon our necks, *(smiles, winks)* a fine feast of good wine 'n fresh raw oysters honey, 'll make me wanna spread my legs!

Gabriel Harvey: Glad these bass drums are throbbing loud enough to keep our talk betwixt ourselves.

Virginia Dare: I like the fact of everybody's bells ringing in perfect rhythm with every well placed step. *(smiling, laughing)*

Gabriel Harvey: We both are tied at the wrist and huddling around this center pole. Something about these dancers circling and dancing like this

gives me an elevated sensation on the inside.

A tall woman with her face painted black, donning a hooded ankle length robe of woven rush flax walks from the circle of dancers toward the center, with both hands raised.

Virginia Dare: Silence! Here comes the head poetess. *(turns to face the poetess)*

Gabriel Harvey: *(smiling, pointing, chuckles)* Behold, the face that launched a thousand ships!

Virginia Dare: Now we know why they sailed away!

Head poetess: *(both hands raised, singing in Croatoan)* The heavy morning haze is lifting. The sun gently peeks around a distant horizon. Behold, new life commences to stir!

The Bass drums sound in a heavy pounding rhythm. Several rattles shake.

Head poetess: A rabbit hops from the bramble thicket. The geese commence to cackle and lift from the water. A fawn arises from her bed inside the thicket, ambling toward the nearest stand of water.

Several rattles shake, heavy rhythm, then softer, then heavier. Women accompany the rattles with a series of chants.

Head poetess: The fawn moves along in a passage of time, being blessed by Papa Gusso, the one and true God of The Universe.

The people chant prayers in unison while dancing in and out among the standing poles in step, as large snapping turtle shells are beaten with reeds, and ankle bells jingle with every step. Virginia Dare steps away to stand by the poetess's side. The poetess embraces her with her left arm.

Head poetess: *(raises her right hand toward heaven)* The doe's age has arrived.

The most powerful, most gifted buck makes an earnest approach.

Gabriel Harvey: *(walks forward to stand beside Virginia Dare. The two wrists are bound by the crimson ribbon again)*

The rattles shake, heavy, then softly, then heavy again. The poetess walks behind the two, singing a chant in a loud screaming voice. Seven strings of snake rattles are shaken on all sides of the couple.

Head poetess: Send thy venerated guardians to accompany these two. Chief Okisko from a distant village has long sent his word. His eyes have been upon this gentle doe. Our sorceress, Chico, has foreseen it all. Now the envious rage of Okisko has been directed toward our village and the approaching buck. Grant us and our doe the fullest protection. Please stand vigilant with her, her new mate and their kind, for all time forward, oh Papa Gusso!

The base drums throb and rumble in heavy united rhythm. The rattles shake. The snapping turtle shells are beaten. The people dance and the women sing chants as they wind in and out among the standing poles.

Gabriel Harvey: Who is this Chief Okisko?

Virginia Dare: *(sighs)* I received a beautiful new dress at my doorstep a few months ago. Nobody saw who placed it there, nor was there any message, except that this chief was the most handsome man in all of Virginia. I was also told he desired me for his wife.

Gabriel Harvey: Didst thou not take this offer seriously?

Virginia Dare: No, honestly not. I heard this chief already had three wives. I'm not playing second lyre to anybody. It's only me or the nearest outgoing stream.

All music and the chanting cease

Head poetess: So now before the very eyes of Papa Gusso, these two, buck and gentle doe, are twain. May they both be prosperous and fruitful. May this knot they bind hold for life. May their spirits unite for all time forward into infinity.

The kettle bass drums rumble. The smaller drums rumble in step. The rattles shake, the dancers maintain their singing voices and their dancing steps. Virginia Dare, Gabriel Harvey, Ananias Dare, and Eleanor Dare, Marjorie Harvey, and Dyonis Harvey join in.

Head poetess exits

Stage lights gradually dim
Stage lights gradually brighten

Fifteen minutes later..

The soup is laddled from the pot. All align for a bowl full. Many people congratulate Virginia Dare and Gabriel Harvey on their new marriage.

Manteo: So what's on now after the meal time?

Gabriel Harvey: We are meeting in mother and father's cabin for our English blessing. To be truthful, I know nothing first hand of English custom, except what I have witnessed here, among our own.

Manteo: Well such would be a proper move for an English couple to make.

Gabriel Harvey: I feel more Virginian or Croatoan, than English. England is only a distant land I've heard much about and read some about from the books we keep from there. Otherwise, 'tis a stranger's realm to me.

Manteo: Honestly, after the wedding, I really do feel ye twain should relocate

again. Thy parents shall understand.

Gabriel Harvey: Why? I don't understand.

Manteo: That Chief, Okisko, shall return, and soon, seeking to gratify his obsession with Virginia. Word more than likely has already made its way to him in regard to Virginia being married. He didn't take to her rejecting his gift. I have investigated the matter, and this chief is also allied with Wanchese, who has it out with both of us.

Gabriel Harvey: I hear of a town farther north called Chowanoke. This entire realm is peaceful, from what I have heard. Maybe in a couple of weeks we'll relocate there. How do ye feel?

Manteo: The village here is soon divided, for security purposes. One of the places proposed at the last council meeting was Chowanoke. The chieftain of the realm has no problems. His name is Caswella, from what I am told. One day soon Wanchese will relinquish his revenge, and all should then be well again.

Gabriel Harvey: (*glancing upward*) With the sun moving downward, we all shall retire to Virginia's parent's cabin. Ours is two cabins down. We shall soon sip wine, relax, and make loads of love. I desperately desire to possess a sensation of security, and home. Looking o'er one's shoulder and moving wears a body down. No time for building prosperity, raising children, or building anything. No time for living.

Stage lights gradually dim into darkness. Gabriel Harvey, Virginia Dare, Manteo, Ananias Dare, Marjorie Harvey exit

Scene 4

Tuesday, May 1st, 1612

Chowanoke Village

Enter Virginia Harvey

Virginia Harvey: The past two days the only sounds I've heard are picks and shovels striking the earth.

Gabriel Harvey: A foul wind sweeps many of our Virginian friends away, it seems to me.

Christopher Cooper: Wanchese's allies did attack Pamlico Village and a few others. I heard thy mother perished, Virginia, and thy father, Gabriel.

Virginia Harvey: The sorceress, Jadis, saw it all in her dark bowl of water. I want to go visit the grave of my mother one day soon. I dreamt I heard this sound of picks and shovels striking the earth all over Virginia. The numbers of fresh graves I saw were staggering.

Christopher Cooper: It appears that way among these Virginia people, for sure.

Virginia Harvey: (*sighs, wipes a tear*) Jadis told me more, Chris. She told me the English established another colony east of here by the sea. I heard so much about my own people from mother and father, I absolutely must pay them a visit.

Christopher Cooper: I haven't heard of such, if such a thing be so.

Virginia Harvey: Our two children absolutely must interact more among their own culture, if possible.

Christopher Cooper: A local scout named Tichuma, is headed out in that direction

two days thence from now. His task is to catch and dry fish, then transport it back on hurdles. Usually a patrol of twelve ventures out with him. I'll mention this settlement to him. He shall bring us due word on the matter.

Virginia Harvey: I, and my husband desperately long for English company. All I've known is the culture I'm in, but deep inside I possess a longing for knowing more of my own. It seems to me there are less and less of us to go around. We split up into groups, go away from one another, then I ne'er hear anything ever again of 'em. At least I have two children, and ye are in possession of two.

Christopher Cooper: I am in possession of two young female children, as art thou. With no males of their own kind to interact among, they and their children shall be absorbed into the local population. Surely, inside the next generation, the English heritage shall Perish from this place.

Virginia Harvey: Maybe these visions of a new colony are true. Maybe we can merge with our own kind. I honestly do not know what to expect. Should I be excited, or am I destined to feel disappointed in my future revelations?

Christopher Cooper: I am up in age enough now that it really doesn't matter to me. I suppose thy grandfather and the others have forgotten all about us anyway, if they are still walking around to think about us.

Virginia Harvey: My children deserve the best. They know all about the classics, how to speak latin, about English and European history prior to the year we exited. I feel my kids are in possession of a solid education. All of the English who accompany us are as well. There is so much more for all of us to learn in regard to all that has occurred since our exit from England back in '87. We have no news.

Christopher Cooper: What sort of exchange might be made for this new information, my fair lady?

Virginia Harvey: We know nothing of them, and they nothing of us. I hold every detail in betwixt these covers twain. (*holds up her mothers note booklet*) From day one our record has been made, first by my mother, then by my own hand.

Christopher Cooper: What sets this work apart from any others possibly made?

Virginia Harvey: There is a daily entry from the moment we exited Plymouth, to the present. Our thoughts, feelings, and daily experiences stand inside this journal. I go into great details regarding these citizens of Virginia. I describe their foods, customs, technical skills, their homes, their methods of warfare, how they plant, build, hunt and gather, cure sickness, and all dangers throughout this colony that I have encountered in my own experience. Nobody anywhere is in possession of such information. My fullest intent is that the English possess these notes, if indeed nothing else I do is accomplished. I wish to discover first hand who my own people are. I've always wondered why Manteo offered us his blessings, and Wanchese cursed us. I offer forth my own surmise in this question.

Christopher Cooper: Such be a truly noble question thou has entrusted upon thyself to answer. I hope the answer lieth upon the wind, if not at least written in sand or water somewhere.

Virginia Harvey: May every life be lived for some purpose. Allow every honest Endeavor to be fulfilled.

Christopher Cooper: May hard truth stand the test of time hence-forth.

Virginia Harvey: (*glances out toward the hearth area in the central court*) Though

I was raised up inside this culture, certain customs are tough to condone with solitude and calm resolute composure.

A native's bloodied body is dragged into the central court area. Men, women, and young children of both sexes race toward this hearth to bear witness to the ceremonial proceeding. They scream, dance, and rage while four priests perform in well rehearsed ritualized movements. The head is severed from the corpse and buried inside the hot sand in the edge of the large central fire.

Christopher Cooper: Yes Virginia, the Croatoan are at war. So it goes for the slain enemy. In England, no less occurs even to the King and Queen. In our own civility child, still yet looms this terrifying ferocity of a beast beneath the surface. Allow the demon of greed or the desperate motivation of want to seize our minds, And behold the hard facts my child, the English are certainly no less brutal.

Virginia Harvey: Yes, war can become its own type of hell. I am very familiar with what happened to the Irish. My own uncle was responsible, so mother told me.

Christopher Cooper: (*gazing toward the procession in the central hearth area*) In the case of this individual, he suffers a horrible punishment. What was surmised as being a corpse, was a partially conscious body. More than likely he was caught in the very act with his own flesh and blood sister. The commotion we heard before the body was dragged down by the central hearth Area by the hair of its own head, was all of these citizens, young and old, dancing, screaming, and striking blows of one sort of another. Finally one blow rendered the poor soul unconscious. They severed the head and buried it inside the hot sand, where it shall shrink down into the size of a large peach. The body they shall burn into ash on the hearth flame, only to toss what remains of the ash into the river, wiping the earth clear of this victim and his horrendous sin, for

evermore.

Virginia Harvey: I adore this culture. Truly it is the culture of my own. Yet I disdain it at the same time.

Christopher Cooper: *(smiling, chuckling)* How is it more vile and horrendous, dear Virginia, than being hanged, drawn, eviscerated, and quartered, while still yet alive for the same crime? A missing farthing can fetch a nine year old to the gallows. A mere word deemed as seditious, can cause even him in his youth, to suffer the former.

Virginia Harvey: Where stands the measure of justice?

Christopher Cooper: *(smiling, gazing out)* And so the English arrived on these shores preaching the gospel, and putting up worship tents.

A native bearing unique tattoos walks up to Christopher and Virginia. He speaks in Croatoan, which is understood somewhat by Christopher.

Christopher Cooper: This is the great Croatoan scout, Tichuma. He informs me that indeed the English have established a colony on the shores of the Chesapeake. It's been in operation for at least five years now, he says. Hard times have befallen the colonists, he tells me.

Virginia Harvey: I find his dialect difficult to comprehend. When can he lead myself and my family out toward this new colony?

Christopher Cooper: He tells me he originated farther south, with a group known as the Tuscarora. He tells me he can exit out at first light tomorrow. The journey is only three days east from this place. He has business to attend out that way anyhow, he says.

Virginia Harvey: My husband and myself shall load our haversacks tonight. We

shall be standing by the door at sunrise.

Christopher Cooper: All is well until then, he says. Aidio, my fair lady.

Virginia Harvey: Fare thee very well, sir.

Stage lights fade until out. Virginia Harvey, Christopher Cooper, and Tichuma exit

Scene 5

Three days later, midday

Jamestown Colony

Virginia Harvey, the two children, and her husband Gabriel Harvey, enter into the gates of James Fort. The soldiers stare as if amazed at her and Gabriel's appearance, as they and their children walk among the natives.

Enter Virginia Harvey

Virginia Harvey: My word, (*gazes around, grimaces*) I feel I've entered paradise lost.

Gabriel Harvey: The cabins and the place at large, appears drab and much deteriorated. Even the men at arms appear to be too much starved, impoverished, and wasted in general.

1st Armed Guard: (*glares at Virginia, smiles, sneers*) My fair lady, who art thou?

Virginia Harvey: (*serious face*) My name is Syble. She who watches in the flame and knows.

1st Armed Guard: (*smirks, sneers*) Why the dress, my lady?

Virginia Harvey: Because it's most appropriate, according to the land and the climate.

1st Armed Guard: (*sneers, glares toward Gabriel*) And who might thou be, if I may dare to ask? (*chuckles*)

Gabriel Harvey: I'm her husband, Modoc.

Virginia Harvey: Where be thy governor?

1st Armed Guard: In yonder state house. The new enterprise man, John Rolfe, may stand in his temporary stead today.

Gabriel Harvey: What, pray tell, be his profitable engagement?

1st Armed Guard: A crop referred to as tobacco. The seeds originate down in the West Indies, with tobacco being the name for the smoking pipe down there.

Gabriel Harvey: As is the name, calabash, here.

1st Armed Guard: Precisely.

Gabriel Harvey: May we visit the governor or his assistant, John Rolfe?

1st Armed Guard: I'll promptly arrange for an escort. (*two pinky fingers in mouth, whistles loudly*)

Escort: (*ragged dirty midget, races up from around the corner*) Sir, yes sir. At thy service sir!

1st Armed Guard: Give this woman, Syble, and her husband, Modoc, escort to the governor's estate. Should the governor not be present on

premise, then John Rolfe shall do.

Escort: *(smiles)* Good en, my fair accomplices. Follow me along.

The procession ambles through the fortress area. Ahead is a cabin with thick walls of dirt surrounding it.

Virginia Harvey: This fort house is reminiscent of Fort Lane, a ruin now that I have bore witness to earlier in life.

Escort: Not familiar with such, my lady. *(approaches the guard by the door, salutes)* Sir, the governor has visitors.

Door guard: Governor is not on premises, I fear.

Escort: Might Rolfe be in?

Door guard: He is.

Escort: Very well.

Door guard: *(faces Gabriel Harvey)* What be thy name?

Gabriel Harvey: Syble and Modoc. We can offer further explanation upon entering inside.

Door guard: Very well. One moment, please. *(steps inside for a few moments)*

Virginia Harvey: Maybe grandfather stands somewhere on these premises.

Gabriel Harvey: Maybe he is in decent health, if indeed he is. *(gazes around, sneers)* I am not getting a good premonition.

Virginia Harvey: *(gazes around, turns up her nose)* There be a foul odor about this place. Don't these people ever wash? The river is behind us

hereabouts. Don't they take morning dips, as we do? My stars and scars, for crying out loud here!

1st door guard: (*opens door*) Right this way, ladies and gentlemen.

Gabriel Harvey, Virginia Harvey, the two children, and 1st door guard, walk into the central room of the wattle and daub estate. Man awaits at the opened door.

Man waiting: Pleasure to meet ye twain. Please enter this way.

Escort exits

The three and the two children enter. Door guard closes the door and stands at attention by the door post. The two and the two children stand before a desk.

Man waiting: Please seat thyself. (*pointing with a right open hand*) My name is John Rolfe. I am the proud owner of Varina Farms, across the river and not far from hence. We specialize in growing tobacco, rolling smoking sticks, and producing pipe tobacco. So, tell me all about thyself! I spy some unusual aspects concerning thy personages.

Virginia Harvey: Sir, I told the guard my name was Sybil, and my husband's name was Modoc, but in reality I am the granddaughter of John White, Virginia Dare, from the fifteen eighty seven colony farther south. I am the daughter of John White's daughter Eleanor White, and her husband Ananias Dare. These two young ladies here with us are our twelve year old daughters, Aiyana, and Odina.

John Rolfe: (*clears his throat, smiles*) 'Tis a pleasure in meeting, but what be thy intentions here?

Virginia Harvey: First and foremost, I'm in search of my grandfather.

John Rolfe: What happened to thy parents?

Virginia Harvey: Both our parents perished in a Virginian attack, so we were informed. There be only a few of us alive to carry on our legacy.

John Rolfe: Raleigh informed me of White, before his own misfortune. White dropped by to care for his estates, from time to time. I possess no specific details regarding White.

Virginia Harvey: Did grandfather ever return for us?

John Rolfe: According to Raleigh he returned in search of the colony back in '90. My instincts inform me he perished not long afterward. Such is only a feeling deep inside, however.

Virginia Harvey: (*gasps, excited*) We were across the harbor only. On the island, Croatoan, among the people of the same name!

John Rolfe: Well, I apologize lady, but thy grandfather became entangled in England's struggle with Spain.

Gabriel Harvey: What happened with Raleigh? Did he not make another attempt to locate his own validation to ownership of the Virginia colony?

John Rolfe: (*smiles, sighs*) Raleigh was imprisoned nine years ago, my friend.

Gabriel Harvey: On what charges?

John Rolfe: Treason, and partially for failing to return profit to his investors, as a direct consequence of his eighty seven colony failing. There is nothing Raleigh or his cohorts may ever do, at this point.

Virginia Harvey: But I am here. We are here, my lord. (*gasps*) I am White's long lost granddaughter! Raleigh's validation for his success lives.
(*places a crimson cloth covered journal upon his desk*)

John Rolfe: (*glances up with hard expression on face*) Explain this journal, lady.

Virginia Harvey: It's a daily log commenced by my mother, Eleanor, then carried on by me. It contains tales and accounts of the fifteen eightyseven colony, over which my grandfather presided as Governor.

John Role: (*course smile*) And who, my pretty, stood in his stead upon his exit?

Virginia Harvey: His lieutenant, sir. (*nervous pause, clears throat*) The one many call Jubal and others Jaspar.

John Rolf: (*serious hard glare. Speaks through teeth*) From what Clan does ole Jasper hale, my fair lady?

Virginia Harvey: Clan Dowlais, sir.

John Rolfe: (*clenches his lips*) I knew it! Now I know why he's condemned for Treason and being held inside the tower gaol! His true intent in his colonial effort was to create a catholic extension on foreign English territory.

Virginia Harvey: Who was creating a Catholic extension? I fear I lack comprehension.

John Rolfe: Need I say any more, my lady?

Gabriel Harvey: (*firm face*) Well sir, we were a happy combination. Daily life is so desperate, not much time remains for conflict o'er one's religious perspectives. Beside that, my wife and I were raised up 'neath the Virginia traditions.

John Rolfe: So, what be thy plans here, other than passing on this information?

Virginia Harvey: We've considered relocating among our own, for the sake of our two children more than ourselves, sir.

John Rolfe: So let it be. (*sighs*) Life has been no picnic here at all for the past five years of our stead in this place.

Virginia Harvey: Forgive us, sir, we haven't heard.

John Rolfe: Some eighty percent of us perished due to disease and starvation. The few who survived were reduced to consuming dogs, cats, rats (*pauses, swallows hard*) and even the fresh corpses of the dead!

Gabriel Harvey: My word, sir! How horrible? No fiend of hell could have dreamed up a better torture.

John Rolfe: (*sighs, gazes hard into the eyes of Gabriel and Virginia*) Young girls sometimes ventured outside the palisade for the purpose of bathing in the river and relieving themselves.

Virginia Harvey: What of it?

John Rolfe: (*angry glare*) They mysteriously vanished!

Gabriel Harvey: And the citizens of Virginia are called savages. What wicked fiend dwells amongst thee?

John Rolfe: With the way people perish around here, we may never know. The colony hereabouts has been abandoned twice already due to the extreme circumstances. We've only recently commenced to trickle back in.

Virginia Harvey: Such be the flower in the desert, then I see.

John Rolfe: Alas, my dear friends, (*smiles broadly*) there stands a bright light behind yon hill. Tobacco may well be our saving grace. My plantation excels. Several more are cropping up. We now have a thriving trade and many possibilities connected with it.

Gabriel Harvey: We wish to dwell amongst this place for a while. We well may relocate permanently here.

John Rolfe: Very well my friends, but thee shall assume thine own risks in the process.

Gabriel Harvey: Then so let it be. We accept our risks.

Aiyana, Odina, Gabriel Harvey, Virginia Harvey, John Rolfe, door guard, exit

Scene 6

June 3rd, 1612

Jamestown colony

Inside the wigwam

Enter Gabriel Harvey

Gabriel Harvey: I'm glad we were raised as Virginia citizens. A wigwam is much easier and more efficiently constructed than these English homes. It only took us two days to raise a structure on par with these cabins. These people may glare at us with these queer expressions on their faces, but I honestly could care less.

Virginia Harvey: The holes we dug in the sand on the beach are collecting enough fish for us. The children enjoy walking out to the beach and stacking them upon a stick.

A stir at the door of the wigwam

Gabriel Harvey: (*walks over, bends down*) How now? Who's there?

Female at door: 'Tis Sarah, the baker and the cheese maker.

Virginia Harvey: (*stands*) Fabulous! Please enter inside.

Sarah: (*stoops, enters*) Have a bit of cake 'N a bowl of snapping terrapin soup, will ya?

Gabriel Harvey: Good! Where was the terrapin found?

Sarah: On the beach, mi brethren, deep down in the sand.

Gabriel Harvey: Were there eggs lady?

Sarah: (*smiles a snaggle toothed grin*) A bait, maybe half a peck, dear sir.

Virginia Harvey: Breakfast for three!

Sarah: (*winks*) Aye, mi fine lady. With a mite of corn mush and blood beans, for several more!

Virginia Harvey: How long ye in?

Sarah: (*snaggle toothed smirk*) The past bi-year. Gates proclaimed a need fer bakers. Trip abroad paid fer. I took 'im up on 't, my lady. Both holes were Stretched sore from yars 'O hard labor inside The Cardinal's Cap 'N The Raucous Belle, 'N a mite worn fer werkin', I humbly inform ye mi lady! I wuz used to bakin' fer mi-self 'N the wenches, so I thunk I'd turn mi hand at his kind offer instead. He accepted and is well pleased, mi lady! So, here I be fer all to see. (*smiles, waves both hands from face to waist as she speaks*)

Virginia Harvey: (*slight chuckle*) What be deduced thus far?

Sarah: (*chuckles, sighs*) 'Tis a trick in the make, mi lady. I know, but the worry isn't mine. (*laughs out loud*) I'm far past feeling violated, long as the effort pays mi way 'N keeps me comfi' 'n sustained.

Virginia Harvey: (*gasps*) I'm not with it, my lady. Please forgive me.

Sarah: Thou be young, mi lady. (*eyes widened, mouth gapes*) Indeed, have ye not noticed hereabouts?

Virginia Harvey: (*gasps, hangs her head*) Please forgive me, lady.

Sarah: Sarrah, mi lady! Thar be many hungry men hereabouts, 'N few women fer them to feed amongst. (*tosses head back, laughs loudly*) Whar hath thee been all yer delicate life? Locked away in a cave? A room? Flying around on a straw broom? (*tosses back head, laughs out loudly*)

Gabriel Harvey: So thou art claiming we're standing in a buggy lane, eh? Am I not right, Sarah?

Sarah: (*smirks*) Look, down the street stand five, ten, maybe a few more, then some Virginia women. Speak, (*shrugs*) see fer thy self. Yes, there be the married vixens, but I know three sly ones amongst em who pander themselves fer an occasional hard won profit, (*pauses, gapes*) an' wid their old man's Permission! (*pauses*) imagine that fer a spell. (*eyes widened*) Yes, believe it as they walk around preaching about the bible and speaking aloud of church tithings!

Virginia Harvey: Why should we believe any of this?

Sarah: Then don't! (*shrugs, explodes into laughter*) Jest fulfilling mi Christian duty mi lady, in bein' honest. I haven't spoken any words, but Rolfe is a business man and a recent success. A man needs drink, (*winks*) aye mi lady, 'N he longs mightily fer affection. Ole Rolfe runs with these Virginia hens. Oh, don't dare be fooled mi lady, he spends his evenings lollying round with the most esteemed stick-lickers, be the receivers Virginian or

English. (*laughs out loudly*) I say, he himself falls fer the much paraded meekness and innocent displays.

Virginia Harvey: (*gasps heavily*) My word, lady! Thou speakest harshly.

Sarah: (*whispers, smiles*) Sarrah lady! The one they call Amonute that ole Rolfe flounders round with the most, I tell ye, is a young vixen amongst these Virginians. Like all the others of her kind who saunter up to the first festival bonfire at first issue, to make her chosen selection among the ripe and ready stiff shanks, likewise did she who ole Rolfe appears to favor most. Aye, so she saunters out the wilderness early one spring morn, mi lady, spying our passionate roustabouts, so young and yearning in such steamy waves of silence and secrecy.

Virginia Harvey: I was raised up among ‘em. I know the game. I chose to forebear.

Sarah: (*smiling, speaking in mysterious course whispering tones*) Aye, mi young lassie. (*pauses, grins*) The handsome Virginia vixen bore ole Smith himself a child! Such be a repressed secret round hereabouts.

Virginia Harvey: (*shrugs*) This man, Smith, was game. Then, so let it be.

Sarah: Every young buck herabouts, had their turn I tell ye! Ole Smith let her go when he came down with a heavy case of the yawls! She cured it fer ‘im wid a slurry O’ scarlet root, honey, ‘N brandy fresh off the still, mi lady.

Virginia Harvey: Was she heart broken?

Sarah: Heart broken? Why, she anticipated a forthcoming slight and had already made herself accommodation with another raucous ripe ‘n ready ramrod!

Virginia Harvey: Really? How intuitive and enterprising of this spent vixen from the Virginia wood..

Sarah: Aye, mi lady, ‘N the word enterprising is a fine one fer clarifying

description. (*leans forward, whispers in a coarse tone*) She draws in a doubloon a month from her new roustabout, ‘N three a month from ole Smith himself, I tell ye! (*laughs loudly*) These she trades for El Caneya ‘N brandy by the gallon, then swaps it fer whate’er is most highly esteemed among her own nation, where she stands as the Queen ‘O aces amongst her own roused ‘n ripened raucous rods.

Virginia Harvey: My holy mother, lady, does Rolfe not know of these covert indiscretions?

Sarah: Not know? He ‘s received secret notes by the peck informing him! This young vixen, I tell ye, casts a spell with her untarnish innocent mannerisms and frolicing plays. Rolfe is beyond belief, and resolute in choosing the queen of an alien nation, amidst all of her status and wealth. Her standing by his own side assures his position of status hereabouts amongst our own, amongst these Virginians, and even courts those abroad as a result.

Virginia Harvey: She knows not of any wrong done. Such be the nature of the culture she thrives in. I was raised up in such a culture myself, and well comprehend the prevailing situation. I chose to go a different route. Some Virginians do so as well, my lady.

Sarah: (*chuckles, sighs*) What be thy craft or service, my lady? Every woman Hereabouts possess one.

Virginia Harvey: Mother and wife. My husband is a brickmaker, layer, and builder.

Sarah: (*gazes around*) Thou art judged and weighed according to the nature of thy enterprise ‘n works. (*grabs the pole supports*) This house shall not measure to the standard, my lady. Much stands to be accomplished.

Gabriel Harvey: Well, so let it be. What we have is enough for us.

Sarah: (*speaks in a course whisper*) Ye know, we ‘re at war with these Virginians hereabouts. Seldom is much heard, yet there be a stir every now

and again. Thou shalt soon find a need to blend in more. Thy home is insufficient, as art thy clothing. Thy mannerisms are much on par with these Virginians about. I've noticed thy children frolic about as does the vixen I spoke of earlier, doing cart wheels, walking 'round half naked, cajoling with them fresh muscular raw stiff-shanks on the outside! I well know the reality here, but such be not esteemed hereabouts, mi fair doll. Allow my warnings to be final. Beware as ye tread softly thence, mi lady. Upgrade as the motion motivates.

Stage lights gradually fade out. Sarah, Gabriel Harvey, Virginia Harvey, The two children, the male and female children on the outside, exit.

Scene 7

4 days later, sunrise

In the open inside the palisade area

Enter Gabriel Harvey

Gabriel Harvey: (*casually walking*) behold this grim routine hereabouts? Cutting wood, cooking, daubing mud upon caked up walls, from morning until nightfall. When is the time for personal pleasure? Virginia culture maintains necessity at a minimum, so there's more time for personal pleasure. I honestly don't relish what I observe. I pity these wretched miserable people myself.

Virginia Harvey: (*casually walking*) I hear no drum, save a monotonous thud of some military marching drum. Everybody appears too worn for wear! Where stands any remaining energy for celebrating?

Gabriel Harvey: (*gazing around*) These people came here searching for freedom, eh our people! What freedom? We venture outside on the beach, yet these pathetic lots never even do that much.

Virginia Harvey: Virginians as well as the English, should observe where the affliction of warfare reduces them into such miserable conditions.

Gabriel Harvey: Which makes mankind greater slaves? Be it the pains of warfare, or the stresses of one's own ambitions, when all he truly needs are the basics of life?

Virginia Harvey: Most certainly the perversion of greed exacerbates the sins of ambition, often leading to warfare. Did the English not first arrive on these untarnished shores seeking golden plunder from the Spanish?

Gabriel Harvey: I was told the Spanish sought golden plunder from the citizens of La Florida and many more places.

Virginia Harvey: We were educated by my mother that the Greeks believed the world afforded more than enough, as granted forth by the supreme God of The Universe. All of mankind's needs were fully met in the distant past. Man's infection of greed caused him to create a world for himself where carnal lust pervaded by this greed could be wholly gratified, from the backs of the people around him whom he virtually imprisoned.

Gabriel Harvey: (*gazing around, sneering*) Aye, my fair lady! The sights about be living proof in that statement.

Woman approaches from inside the cabins, hard glare and grimace

Woman: (*upturned sneer*) My word woman. Ye 'n thy man dwell in that stick house yonder, I see?

Virginia Harvey: Yes, been there a bit more than a moon now.

Woman: So when ye scheming to build thy home?

Virginia Harvey: (*chuckles*) We two already have. In two days we acquired what it took thee and thine, some ninety days to accomplish. We're perfectly content to speak the truth.

Woman: (*glares up and down*) And them painted deer hides for dress? Thou art in need of English threads, rather than savage skins.

Virginia Harvey: 'Tis much too much in this Virginia heat. We shall cheerfully retain what we own.

Woman: What be thy crafts? House servant? Child nurse? Cook? Or strumpet?

Virginia Harvey: Pardon me, but I'm a wife and a mother. My husband be a brick maker 'n builder.

Woman: Judging from thy home and thy dress, neither possess any skills at anything. (*glares both up and down*) Besides that, I have yet to observe any labor from either one of ye.

Virginia Harvey: We eat. We have shelter. We have clothing. We labor enough for these items.

Woman: What about tax time coming up at the end of this year? Thou shalt owe a double tithe on that simply for possessing a land plot.

Virginia Harvey: (*shrugs*) So let it be then. We'll not owe much, as any may Kindly observe.

Woman: (*jaw drops, sighs*) But there 're laws, lady. Laws compel one to participate, rather than drop out. Half of this labor ye observe out here is simply to pay the double tithe. Should we forebear, then the amount is

doubled again, with sentencing into the local dungeon. We aren't allowed to carry weapons, since these leaders fear mutiny.

Virginia Harvey: (*gazes out beyond the palisade*) There lies a much better reality than this.

Woman: What life lady? There lies only death at the hands of vindictive savages. (*gazes outward where the children are playing*) "N thy children? Make no objection to my words, lady. Half the roustabouts surrounding her have laid hands already, and neither one knows not their own folly! (*glares firmly, gasps*) The church shall soon make summons to ye twain. (*huffs away*)

Virginia Harvey: My feelings sink. Sarah was right, was she not?

An hour later an obvious priest approaches

Priest: (*walks up, pauses*) I was asked by both the magistrate and the deacon to confront ye twain.

Gabriel Harvey: How now, sir?

Priest: I need three golden doubloons for the privilege of living here only. Also, this hut I notice ye twain dwelling inside, stands against local policy. Ye have a week to commence construction on an English lodge.

Gabriel Harvey: But we choose not to do that. We enjoy our manner of living.

Priest: There is no choice here but to pay, motivate to comply, or exit out. It be all that plain and simple. (*pauses*) And by the way, those children and thou both, find English clothing to wear, since bawdy dress is forbidden by law and punishable by fine and time in the stocks. I'll forbear on mentioning bawdy conduct. I know all about the splendor in the hedges and the pleasant carnal treats ye daughters bestow upon our young innocent sons. Make haste, please. No time remains to waste. (*turns and walks away*)

Gabriel Harvey: (*pauses, sighs*) Once we make it back to our lodge, let us commence packing our bags.

Virginia Harvey: (*stressed*) Our daughters may not want to go, Gabe.

Gabriel Harvey: (*gazes toward the woods, pauses*) First light tomorrow, we shall commence our hike. In the end our daughters shall thank us mightily for moving back into our true home. At least our story up until this moment, shall be known by them and all time into the future. Let our fate be that of the goddess, Libertia's, unadulterated people.

Virginia Harvey: Let not false prosperity, bind us, nor any trickster's feign of security allow us to forbear our uninhibited advancement or movement. The gifts of coddlers and self-serving Fabian manipulators shall eternally be castaway in adamant rejection. Allow us and all of Lady Libertas people to speak the mighty patriot's eternal vow aloud, even to the bitter end. Henceforth onward, all of us and our kind shall live free or die, forever free.

Stage lights fade out, momentary pause. Lights suddenly pop on, with focus directed upon a single character.

Virginia sorceress: (*stirring in a spider legged cauldron*) Potion of mushroom, soup of toad, ye spirits of the east we design to goad. Virginia's citizens shall know total death. Their civilization shall be recalled as one time left. Now the English have come, their grand moment has finally been won.

In time distant brutal invaders from the far South and the far East shall usher in strange disease, and unto their children the same bondage, death, war and destruction, shall one day come with the rising of the sun. Surely then, on that day the death angel shall

move about as he pleases.

Lights fade out. Virginia sorceress exits. Curtains fall

THE END

A Yellow Ribbon Round The Ole Live Oak Tree



H.L. Dowless

Cast of Characters

Mrs. McNeill: top 2nd grade teacher

Mr. McNeill: headmaster, suit and tie, professional

Mrs. Allen: first grade teacher, long 1920's style of dress, sunbonnet

CL: student- intelligent, clean, well dressed

Crook: student, polio victim, walks with a serious limp, intelligent, plain but neatly dressed

Fish: student, intelligent- very opinionated, plain but neatly dressed, brogans, clean cut

Gene Coffee: student - intelligent- well dressed, glasses

Mary Cromarty: student - dresses in an academy student's outfit, intelligent in appearance.

Beau Weible: student - bibbed overalls, brogans, colored tee shirt, average intelligent, very street smart

Tonya Timora: student - pallid sullen complexion, plain dressed, faded jeans, tee shirt.

Chris the Hippie : YaHoo- student- unkempt long hair, ragged clothes, fails his grade, horrible antagonistic attitude, caustic personality.

Airic Linberger: YaHoo - student - sidewall Squiggy-styled hair, ragged jeans and flannel clothing, never washes, flunked two grades.

Fatso: YaHoo, ragged, overweight - ragged clothes, unintelligent, flunks two grades

Tiny Teresa Tin Pecker: student - well dressed - academy student's outfit- intelligent-bashful

Jimmy Tin Pecker: student - very well dressed - clean cut - intelligent- very street savvy

Leon the Flea-back: student- gray green skin, lizard like face, scaly skin, lizard tail

hanging behind, flunks a grade

Zebby the Flea-back: student -gray green skin, lizard like face, scaly skin, lizard tail hanging, flunks a grade.

Marvin the Flea-back: student - overweight - Grey green skin, lizard like face, scaly skin, lizard tail hanging, flunks a grade..

Tammy Two Step: student- academy dress uniform style clothes.

Curtis Curleyhead: student - jeans and tee shirt, average intelligence, pleasant personality

Sandy Slinky: student- well dressed - intelligent- blond ponytails

Norma Bently: student - slow - serious limp, mentally slow - blond hair, pallid skin, blue eyes

Cynthia the Flea-back: student- gray green skin, very overweight, academy girl dress, lizard like face, scaly skin, lizard tail hanging

Lisa Lamedame: student, slow, red hair, slightly overweight, stutters

Donna Darling: student - witch- swarthy complexion, straight As, wears dark long dresses & a pointed hat- shoulder length black hair- very attractive.

Darwell the Flea-back: student- rags, worn out sandals, gray green face, scaly skin, lizard-like face, lizard tail hanging in rear

Deneane Demoneillie: academy school girl dress. Student and church patron, average intelligence, quiet

Alex Fickle: Church attendant, distant, aloof

Lonnie Laggard: Church attendant, avoids physical exertion, stupidly playful

Jeanie Sunshine: Mrs. McDowell's niece, faded clothing, very attractive face and body, ragged denim coveralls, brogans, very intelligent

Twyla Clothcutter: student, expensive dresses, wears glasses, straight A grades

Act One

Scene 1:

(Setting)

Morning arrives at a small 20x20 wood framed school house on the edge of a scattered oak wood stand. A soupy fog whitens the land, hanging heavily onto the wood framed building. One at a time fifty (or twelve on stage) child students walk up homemade brick steps, across a wood planked porch, through double wooden doors, into an open one room classroom divided by a waist high bookcase running two thirds of the way across the floor. The book case is filled with Jump Sally Jump reading books, Captain Kangaroo Spelling and writing books, Mickey Mouse Club Math books, Doctor Seuss sleepy time reading books, science text books about the latest Sputnik space technology and the new transistor radio, for first and second grade.

The Head Master's Wife, Mrs McNeil, stands proudly on the porch beside the opened doors in her fancy straw sunbonnet with the wide pink ribbon, wearing a white and calico ankle length Edwardian Jacket Dress. She greets the students warmly with a smile as they pass over the door threshold.

Enter Mrs. McNeil

Mrs. McNeil: Good Morning students.

Tammy Two Step: *(smiles)* Good Morning teacher.

Curtis Curlyhead: *(smiles)* Good Morning teacher.

Gene Coffee: Good Morning teacher

Several more students walk past Mrs. McNeil behind Tammy, Curtis, and Gene. They all take their seats according to the grade they are in. The division on the side of the bookcase opposite the door is second grade. A few from 3rd and 4th grades are mixed in. Curtis and Gene take their seats at desks in the division closest to the door. Tammy walks over to the opposite area where the second grade is.

On the wooden porch left of the steps sits CL, Crook, and Fish. A long blue Marquis Mercury drives up close to the wood plank porch. The passenger door opens suddenly. Out jumps Beau Weible. .

Enter Beau Weible

Beau Weible (*as he is excitedly running*); How is it Fish? I know you from church.

Crook:(*gasps*) Fancy you being here!

Beau Weible: I remember you, Crook, from Center Road Christian Academy. What are you doing here, boy?

Fish: Why, he's doing the same thing here we are, for crying out loud!

Crook: Yeah, boy, I'm doing the same thing here you are! Do you remember that big chicken-snake Mr. Meyers found in the hedge bushes at our old school?

Beau Weible: Yeah, sure do, and the way he popped that snake's head off by snapping his tail like a whip! I remember more, all of them beatins he gave ole William Little with that thick razor strop and that fish shaped wood paddle with the holes in it.

Crook: (*Chuckles*); But somethin' was bad-wrong with that boy. Every day he was gettin' caught up in some deep doo-ey, I think. (*sighs,*) He was kinda- slow, if ya ask me.

Beau Weible: Yeah, the day before ole William was caught a-eatin' year old moldy cheese Mrs' Meyers tossed out the back door of the church house there the day before that.

Crook: (*smiles, chuckles*); I kin still hear them strops a-smackin' when Mr. Meyers caught hold of him.

Beau Weible: Do you miss the old school any, Crook?

Crook: Sort of. I still see the people we knew from time to time.

Beau Weible: (*Sighs, drops his head*); I don't. I guess I'll never see any of 'em again.

Crook: Who do you miss most of all?

Beau Weible: Penny for sure, but then there is Lori too. I think I'll miss her.

Crook: Penny was that little playful girl with them curly-blond ponytails. I remember her very well. Her last name was Twistflax, I think.

Fish: Awe, listen to both of you little boys there now. He likes them girls, boys now, let me tell all of ya!!

Crook: *(rubs his right index finger over his left one as he speaks)* Yeah, shame, shame, shame on you-ones now.

Other students congregate in front of the porch by the one room schoolhouse. Through the standing oaks away from the small one room schoolhouse, is a small baseball field. Fish, CL, Crook, and Beau Weible walk away from the porch, over toward the edge of the woods overlooking the baseball field.

Beau Weible: What is this place?

Fish: This is the baseball field.

Crook: But I never see anybody playin' baseball hereabouts.

Fish: *(glares hard at Crook)* On Fridays at recess after lunchtime they do. Where have you been? *(both laugh)*

CL: I've smelt a whiff of rabbit-tobacco from time to time when you walked past me the other day, and thought I spied an acorn hull pipe with a grass stem earlier near you today, Crook. Shame on you boy, for not sharing with us.

Crook: I'll never tell!

Beau Weible: Do we have to play baseball around here on Fridays, if we don't want to?

Fish: No, but what else is there to do that's worth anything?

CL: We can walk around the field exploring the woods, the flowers, the grass, and who knows what else..

Fish: And get into trouble...

Crook: With who?

Fish: Them YaHoos would be a good place to begin with.

CL: You know it.

Beau Weible: Them YaHoos? Who are they?

CL: You'll find out, boy. We don't even mention their names around here.

Beau Weible: Well, I want to know.

CL: They never play ball or do anything they are supposed to. They always hang out on the other side of the ball field over there, next to the woods.

Crook: So you're talkin' 'bout big ole Klavin from Arizona territory, Chris the hippie, and his no-good brother, Fatso.

CL: And don't you dare leave out ole Airic Linburger from this pack of hungry wolves.

Beau Weible: What's so bad about these people?

Fish: They're all so big and tall because they failed at least two grades. They all wear raggedy old hand-me-down clothes, with patches sewn all over 'em. Some have these new fangled iron-on patches too, but Mumzie says they're not as good as the old cut-out and sew on ones.

CL: They all have rotten teeth since they never brush theirs. They never wash and smell like bandi-coot roadkill that's been whizzed on.

Crook: Yeah, I whizzed on my old dog once, and wouldn't pet him for a whole month! I know that smell, for sure!

Beau Weible: Well, in the summertime when we pole-raft down Jeffries Creek, me and some friends camp out on Booger Island there, where the creek splits, then meets up again. We all go more 'an a week without washin' then, to tell the truth. Sometimes we'll go a whole month, livin' in tents, huts

, and off fish caught on set lines, nab-corn, robbins, and pigeons we shoot with our Daisy pellet guns we got at Christmas time. It's really fun playin' pirate, explorin' far and wide, an' a-roustin' all around as we please. I really like being uncivilized, to tell the truth about it. Growing up don't seem very exciting to me.

Fish: *(sighs)* But that's different. That's during summer break. We're all supposed to do them kind of things at that time. We ain't supposed to during school times, now.

CL: But them YaHoos are different now. They 're always a-tryin' to start trouble with us.

Crook: Yeah Beau-hump, even their sisters stink and look like witches. One even wears a hat like one. You seen her, Lisa, the one who keeps askin' dumb questions in class an' kin barely talk, since she stutters so much.

Fish: Don't you dare put down witches like that!

Crook: Hey boys, we didn't tell ole Beau here what we found yesterday...!

Beau: What did you-all find?

CL: We found some bones, dook-us. Big ole dry bones.

Beau: What kind O' bones, Hoss?

CL: *(flicks his eyes back and forth, shrugs)* Awe..I don't know.

Fish: They were some old cow bones, that's all. Grandpa told me this place was once a cow pasture a long time ago.

Beau: Wow! How long ago?

Fish:*(shrugs)* Beats me!

In the distance to the right: *Jingle, Jingle, Ring a ling!*

Crook: Don't look now boys, but we all gotta run!

CL: It's class time once more again. There's Mrs Allen and Mrs. McNeil a-ringin' the hand Jingle!

Crook, CL, Fish, and Beau Weible exit

Scene 2

Enter CL, Crook, Fish, Beau

CL, Crook, Fish, and Beau race toward the steps at the porch. The students standing in front of the porch begin walking up the steps in single file. CL, Crook, Fish, and Beau follow behind. CL begins to step past Mrs McNeil.

Enter Mrs. McNeil

Mrs. McNeill: *(suddenly steps in front of CL. and the three behind him);*
What were you boys doing by the field yonder?

CL: Singing songs Mrs. McNeill, a-recitin' poetry, counting stones, ponderin' our wrongs, seeking notoriety. *(Smiles broadly)*

Mrs. McNeill: *(With a firm face);* That much I am sure of..! But anyway, all of you were about to-be-late for class.

Crook: *(smiles)* Good morning Mrs. McNeill.

Crook follows behind CL walking toward the desks on the side next to the door.

Fish: *(serious look)* Good morning Mrs. McNeill. *(walks past)*

Beau: Good morning Mrs. McNeill. *(walks past)*

Mrs. McNeil: All of you, get into that classroom now!

The students step in, seating themselves. Mrs. McNeill grabs both wooden double doors, pulling them together. The last few students sit down at their desks. The classroom clatter settles. Mrs. McNeill walks to the front of the classroom. Mrs. Allen in

her ankle length dress with her flaming red hair tied up in a bun, steps up beside her.

Enter Gene Coffee, Mrs. Allen

Mrs. McNeill: Class, what is it in the world around us that we could question? Being able to question, then search out facts for answers, is part of the educational process. The scientific process was built upon that ability.

Gene Coffee: *(Raises his right hand. Mrs. Allen points directly toward him);* Why is the sky blue?

Mrs. Allen: That's a great question Gene. Now you will have to search out answers in the library later on.

Mrs. McNeill: That would be a great paper for a research project, Gene. Any more questions?

Thomas Adams: Where do mushrooms come from, since we have so many growing around this school house now?

Mrs. Allen: Good question as well, Thomas.

Mary Cromarty: *(Quickly raises her right hand. Mrs. Allen nods her head toward her);* Where do babies come from?

Jill, Gene, and Betty Rae, glance over at one another, snickering.

Mrs. McNeil: Great question Mary dear. We shall be in the library soon to investigate the answer to this and all questions. We will need this information to make notes for our papers to address these subjects.

Lisa Lamedame: *(Raises her right hand quickly. Mrs. Allen nods her head in her direction);* (stutters) Why do people tie yellow ribbons around old oak trees?

Mrs. Allen: Where have you heard of this custom, Lisa?

Lisa Lamedame:*(stutters)* From a song I hear'd on the radio.

Mrs. Allen: I have a transistor radio here. Lets flip the station to WOLH. They play the

latest hits.

Mrs. Allen steps over toward her desk in the corner of the first grade side of the room. She picks up a small hand held transistor radio, snapping it on, then turns the knob with her right hand. A few fuzzy songs pop up. The Old Yellow Ribbon is soon playing.

Lisa Lamedame: *(stutters)* That's it! That's the one! That is the song tellin' us all about it!

Mrs. Allen: The song says if you still want me, then tie a yellow ribbon 'round the old oak Tree. Doesn't that song sound so nice and pleasant?

Lisa Lamedame: The man singing the song says he's been gone for three long years.
(stutters) He says to his girl if he don't see the ribbon he'll hop on the bus, forget about Us, and she can put the blame on him.

Mrs. McNeil: It's still worth researching. Let us begin working on our morning starter.

Gene Coffee: Whut are we writin' about?

Mrs. McNeil: What we discussed in class yesterday.

Gene Coffee: But we have no paper teacher, only these sorry small chalkboards. I've complained to my Mumzie about this stuff, you know.

Mrs. McNeil: Well, for this project I have some new paper stacked up on the bookcase in the middle of the room here. Everybody can walk there and find it for themselves.

The class arises from their desks. The students walk toward the bookcase, finding the paper and picking up a piece one by one. They walk back to their seats , each behind the other.

Mrs. Allen: I'll find a replay of that song for you as you work.

Twists the knob on the transistor radio until the song pops up again.

Mrs. Allen: WOLH is the best station for sure, but we've located another one here.

The classroom silences as the students begin writing.

30 minutes later...

Jing a ling! Jing a ling! Jing a ling!

Mrs. McNeil rings the hand-bell again

Enter Gene Coffee

Gene Coffee: Wow! I can't believe it's already time for morning break.

Twyla Clothcutter: Time passes when we stay busy, like we are always told.

Mrs. McNeil: (*Speaking from the front of the classroom*); All of you know the protocol by now. Single file behind the door, please!

Students race up into line. When the last student steps into line, Mrs. McNeill opens the door on the right hand side. The students race across the porch, down the steps, into the yard. Some students hang around on the porch and the steps. Other students scamper out into the yard. Beau, CL, Crook, and Fish walk over toward the baseball field. They pause on the edge of the oak stand.

CL: Time can't pass fast enough for me.

Fish: Me either, but I'm not rushin' it.

Beau: Yeah, I'm takin' it as it comes, like Pap 'N Mumzie always tells me.

Crook: I can sing in my mind to make the time pass for me.

A shy behaving slim dark haired girl moves from the front of the old wood framed schoolhouse, toward the boys.

Enter Peanuts

CL: Hmm, boys, who is this?

Fish: What-a-ya know, maybe it's a witch on the hunt.

Crook: I bet I know who her prey is. (*Crook faces Beau rubbing his right index finger across his left*) Shame, shame, shame!

The somewhat thin girl steps up, raising her head, facing Beau with a smile.

Beau: Hello Peanuts, how do you do?

Peanuts: Fairly well, thank you.

Beau: (*Smiling as he speaks*); It's been a while now, no talk, no see. Remember the other day back at the old school, Peanuts?

Peanuts: When the headmaster pulled us into his office?

Beau: Yeah...(*smiles, shrugs, chuckles*)

Peanuts: I remember what happened that got us both in there, naughty boy. You know, he called our Mums, don't you?

Beau: What did your'n say?

Peanuts: (*face droops*) She whooped me good, and tole me not to ever speak with the likes of bad boys like rotten ole you!

Crook: Listen to the stir now boys! Some news be in-there! What happened, Beau now?

Beau: Like grand-Pap tells me, never let your right hand know what your left hand is doing.

Beau steps off to the side with Peanuts.

Fish: (*gazing toward Beau and Peanuts*) Ooh wee, now look at 'em go!

CL: Ooh wee, the sun is a-shinin' Hoss! !

Crook: Something 's a-stir, now boys!

Beau: (*turns in Peanuts direction*) Tell me, now Peanuts.

Peanuts: I tole you, boy. You never listen to anybody. That's yer problem. Pap says Clan Weible is known for not listening, and bein' downright hard-headed.

Beau: Your Mumsie really said that to you?

Peanuts: Yeah, she did. What did your'n say?

Beau: First she cried, then hacked me for doin' what the Flea-backs told me to do.

Peanuts: Yeah, my Mumzie didn't like that part either. She says she's glad there's not but five in our whole school.

Beau: Gosh dang it though, I'd O' done it anyway, Peanuts. It wasn't bad!

Peanuts smiles, gazing directly over at him.

Beau: I'd do it all over again now, to tell the truth about it. (*glances around nervously*)
I've gotta go now, Peanuts!

Peanuts: Yeah, I gotta too. See ya later!

Peanuts exits.

Beau walks back toward the boys.

Crook: Naughty, naughty now, Beau-pop. What was that all about, ole hambone?

Fish: Humm (*chuckles*) Is he talking?

CL: Yeah, that boy has things to tell us, rat-heel, and nigh!

From the woods across the ballfield, a lone lanky male figure heads their way. The boys glance up quickly..

Enter Airic Linberger

Crook: What, oh what, do I spy with my eye, boys?

Fish: Looks like a long tall YaHoo to me!

CL: Which one, or does it even matter making a difference between 'em?

Fish: I think it's Airic.

Crook: It'll smell like him soon, fer shore.

The tall figure walks across the ballfield, up to the boys. He wears patched over blue jeans. He has a flat top haircut. He wears a baggy flannel shirt with worn holes all in it. He wears a brown ragged floppy hat. He smells as if he hasn't bathed in days.

CL: *(holding his nose)* Gosh boys, is it human?

Fish: *(holding his nose)* Of course not, it's a YaHoo!

Crook: *(holding his nose)* Oh no, it's Airic Linberger!

Airic Linberger: *(a gruff voice, hard glare, smirks)*; Your toast, bo diddley boy.

Beau: Me? What 's my crime? *(shrugs)* I'm new 'round hiah..!

Airic Lindberger: You think you 'r so hot 'round here already. I don't see any-thang so great about you. Neither does the real people out here (*waves his left hand toward the woods across the ball field*)

Beau: What? Me? I don't get it.

Airic Lindberger: *(smirk)*; Well boy, you will. This is our turf here. No foreigner can come in here and take over, like it seems to us where you think you can. We got-chor number, Didley! We know how to make you scream for mercy. Soon us real people 'll own this place round here. Don't believe me? Wait and see!

Beau: We? We who?

Airic smiles his smirk

Fish: I see him hangin' 'round them Flea-backs. That's who I think it is.

Crook: Or others like him. All of 'em deserve what they get.

CL: (*glancing toward Airic*) We're ready for whatever.

Airic Linberger: Well, (*smirks*) we got chor number, Didley, and you'll be hearin' from us real soon.

Airic Lindbergfer exits.

Crook: We need to be careful out there boys.

Fish: Seems like he's after you, ole Beau boy there!

Beau: (*shrugs*) I'm not worried about it.

Crook: (*smiles*) Tell us about that girl.

Beau: It happened back at Center Road Christian Academy.

Fish: What was her name now?

Beau: Peanuts.

The other three laugh.

CL: What kinda name is that?

Beau: She's-a-Lewis. That's all I know. I don't know why in-smack ever-body calls her Peanuts.

Crook: Well, what in the name of Golly Molly happened?

Beau: And nobody said nothin'. Nothin' said, nothin' known, so the answer is nothin'.

Fish: We're all in. You're not goin' to tell us, oh Beau-pop?

Beau: I haven't even seen her for awhile now. I didn't even know she was going to

school here.

CL: She started coming here last month. She seems so quiet, and never says much.

Fish: (*smiles*) This reminds me of a poem Mrs. Allen made us remember not long ago.

Crook: What a tangled web we weave, when only we practice to deceive.

Crook, Beau, CL, Fish, exit the stage

Scene 3

Enter Mrs. McNeil

Mrs. McNeill: (*On school house porch, shaking handbell*); *Jing a ling! Jing a ling! Jing a ling!* It's class time! It's class time

The students line up single file at the steps of the old wood framed schoolhouse. Mrs. McNeill turns and opens the right hand door. She steps to her right when her back is to the door, facing the students. The students walk in single file one at a time, taking their seats at their proper desks. The last one steps inside. Mrs. McNeil closes the door. The students settle down. Mrs. McNeil and Mrs. Allen walk to the front of the classroom.

Mrs. McNeil: All of us have our own questions to research here. If you don't, then research the reason why yellow ribbons are often tied on old oak trees. So now students we are going to line up and walk over to the school library building, back up the driveway outside, and over to the right from where you turn to come in here. Now, I'm going to warn all of you. Don't you dare give Miss McDowel any trouble in there, or else! So let us line up now!

The students line up row by row, single file by the door of the old wood framed schoolhouse. The last student steps up. Mrs. McNeil opens the door. The students walk in perfect single file down the dirt driveway, branching right. Ahead is a small 20 x 40 time and weather worn wooden warehouse. This is the school library.

Gene Coffee: Mrs. McNeil, why can't your husband invest in us some new books,

buildings, and things? We want new, up to date things. We don't even have paper and pencils around here! Our old school doesn't even have a decent bell to ring, imagine that for a moment, will ya?

Mrs. McNeil: Well, we all know your father owns the drug store over there in our little town and is the only druggist for miles around, but the rest of us are too poor to afford it. The old Bethel Township is a poor precinct located in an undeveloped county. We simply can't afford it. *Besides that Gene, the pioneers would have loved to possess what we are blessed with here now. What would have been good for them, is fine for us.*

Beau suddenly stops walking. Twyla Clothcutter rushes up hard against him from behind. Twyla backs up with an astonished expression on her face.

Enter Twaila Clothcutter

Beau: *(turns, smiling broadly)* Sorry Twyla, a stone is in my shoe, I think. That's better than yellow jackets, like I got in my shoes at the other school.

Twyla: *(angry expression on her face); Frankly Beau,* I think you are mad, bad, and if you don't mind me saying so, rather dangerous to know!

Beau: Surely a real lady after my own heart!

Twyla: You 're not right! Why don't you walk? The line moves ahead yonder, boy.

Beau: Not a bad idea, if one should ask me.

Beau turns and begins walking forward.

The line makes it to the library. Mrs. McNeil is at the front. Mrs. Allen is bringing up the rear. Mrs. McNeil knocks on the door. An elderly woman wearing a hair bun and an ankle length 1880s styled long sleeved dress opens the door. The students step up inside, taking their seats at the tables, 6 to a table. Beau, CL, Crook, Fish, and Twyla sit at one table. Twyla sits beside Fish. Beau sits on the opposite side with an empty chair beside him on his right, across from Fish and Twyla. Crook and CL sit at the ends. Slowly a hooded feminine figure walks up. She eases into the empty chair beside Beau. The students are seated and settling. Miss McDowel stands before them in the center of the room, with the librarian's desk behind her.

Enter Miss McDowel

Miss McDowel: Class, now I shouldn't need to remind you, but there 's absolutely no talking in the library. Any person not willing to respect this in my library can leave now.... All of you have work to do, so let us be on it.

The students commence stirring around. They move from the tables to the book shelves, then back to the tables.

Beau: *(turns to his right side)* You walked up fast enough, I should say.

Peanuts: Why not? The chair was empty, boy

Beau: *(smiles)* Frankly my dear, I'm glad that you did.

Peanuts: *(smiles)* Me too. Did the others mind?

Beau: *(shrugs)* I don't care if they did.

Beau eases his right hand underneath the table onto Peanut's left hand laying in her lap. They clasp hands slowly.

Peanuts: *(whispers, worried expression);* Beau not now, what if we get into trouble?

Beau: Last time we were on the back seat of a church activity bus with some Flea-backs.They were cheering us both on, remember?

Peanuts: They didn't make us do anything. You were going to do it anyway. I know you, Beau boy!

Beau: Why do we have to go to school with Flea-backs anyway?

Peanuts: Mum talks about that all the time. Gramps says the country will soon fall apart because of it.*(sighs)* Mumsie 'N gramps says they didn't have to, so why do we?

Beau: *(shrugs)* Nobody knows, except that we do. Uncle says the Bermeister tells us we have to, so we just do it. That's why.

Peanuts: Who in the world is that?

Beau: I don't know! He tells everybody what to do. That's all I know.

Miss. McDowel silently walks up behind Beau and Peanuts. She suddenly lays her left hand on Beau's right shoulder. She lays her right hand on Peanut's left shoulder. Both are startled, glancing backward and upward.

Miss. McDowel: *(grimacing hard face)* You two must stop this physical activity and this talking.

Peanuts: *(Disturbed and worried);* O.K. Miss McDowel.

Beau: *Looks upward into her face, smiling..*

Miss. McDowel: *(sighs);* Here, I have an idea that will work. *(grabs Peanut's left arm firmly)* You, come with me, Miss Jezabelle. .

Peanuts arises from her seat

Beau: No, please Miss McDowel, we'll be quiet and won't hold hands any more, I promise!

Peanuts hesitates

Miss. McDowel: No, fickle Jezebel! Come with me now, gal. Time's a wastin'!

Peanuts reluctantly walks with Miss. McDowel. She takes a seat three tables over from where Beau sits. CL, Fish, Crook, and Twyla Clothcutter glance over at one another, smiling. Mrs. McDowel walks back over toward the librarian's checkout desk at the front of the library. She commences removing paper, one sheet at a time, from a large stack. All is now totally silent in the library.

Crook *(whispering);* What was that all about, Beau boy, now?

Beau: *sits smiling, gazing toward Miss McDowell.*

Time Passes...

Beau scribbles something on a small ripped shred of paper. He abruptly arises from his seat at the table. He walks back toward Peanuts, dropping the note before her. She picks the note up. She opens it. The printed note instructs her to get at the back of the

line when library time ends.

More time passes..

All remain quiet. Miss. McDowel suddenly arises from the librarian's checkout desk, stepping out a ways from the front of the checkout desk.

Miss. McDowel: Everybody line up now. It's time to go already. It will be lunch time by the time we make it back to the school house.

The class places all books down on the tables where they are sitting. The students line up one by one at the door. Peanuts is the last student in line. Beau steps up in front of her nonchalantly, with an intelligent smirk on his face.

Miss. McDowel: Everybody now, follow me, like we always do.

Miss McDowel exits out the door at front of the line

Beau: *(Holds his left hand up in front of Peanuts, whispers)* Wait, don't say a word.

The student ahead of Beau walks out without glancing backwards. He flips the light switch. He closes the door on his way out. The room is dark.

Beau: *(Whispers);* See now, I told you I have it all under control.

Peanuts: *(Gasps, out of breath from fright and shock);* How now, crazy boy?

Beau: *(whispers);* Now it's you and me only.

Peanuts: I'm scared Beau.

Beau: Don't be. I'm not gonna hurt you. Our eyes will find light before long.

Peanuts: *(disturbed expression)* We got into trouble last time, boy.

Beau: I blame it all on them Flea-backs.

Peanuts: Flea-backs ain't here now.

Beau hugs Peanuts closely, kissing her lightly on the cheek.

Peanuts: Beau now... Shame on you, bad boy!

Beau pulls her closer, kissing her again on the cheek...

Peanuts: Flea-backs, eh?.....

Beau kisses her again on the cheek.

Instantly the door opens. A sudden explosion of light blinds the two. Miss. McDowel boldly strides across the threshold. She snaps the light switch, slamming the door closed. A hard rigid expression is on her face.

Lights suddenly click off, Beau. Peanuts, Miss McDowel exit

Scene 4

Enter Miss McDowel

Miss. McDowel: (*Shaking her finger as she speaks*); Ah ha! I caught the both of you in action, did I not? Who do you children think you are? We can have none of this stuff around here. None of this commotion now!

Miss. McDowel grabs both children by the right and left arms. She yanks them both along towards the door. Peanuts commences sobbing loudly.

Miss. McDowel: Come with me children. First we're going to march over to that school house. Then we're going to visit Mr. McNeil. Then after he strops both of you down good, we're calling your Mums. That's what we shall do, I'm telling both of you! I'm sure they'll be happy to hear of this matter.

Miss. McDowel, Peanuts, and Beau walk down the narrow dirt driveway in the direction of the school house. Miss McDowell is in the center, with a child in either hand. They make a sharp left from the library. The kids walk up the steps, onto the porch, up to the door. Miss McDowel walks up to the door behind them, knocking firmly. The door opens. Mr. and Mrs. McNeil are standing there with both arms folded.

Enter Miss McNeil

Mrs. McNeil: How now, what have we here?

Mr. McNeil: Two teeny dove birds stirring up loads of trouble for us to deal with, I see.

Peanuts: *(Sobbing)*; But we didn't do anything bad!

Mrs. McNeil: *(hard expression)* What on earth have you got to say for yourself, young man?

Beau: *(smiles, opens arms with palms up)* Blame me, I'm at fault. It's all on me. She done nothing.

Mrs. McNeil: *(hands on both hips)* What boy? Both of you are guilty, far as I am concerned.

Beau: She done nothing, I tell you! It's all my fault. I put her up to it.

Mr. McNeil: Son, what do you mean when you say she's innocent?

Beau: I talked her into it, so let her go and I'll take the fall!

Mr & Mrs. McNeil, and Miss. McDowel glance-over toward one another. Nobody says a word.

Mr. McNeil: *(sighs, pointing)* Both of you walk over to the back room and eat your lunch.

Beau and Peanuts walk over to the small back room. The other students are sitting on the floor with their lunch boxes opened, eating lunch. Beau and Peanuts grab their own two lunch boxes from a bookcase. A space at the left-hand wall by the window is available. The two sit on the floor with the others. Some students are outside with the back door open, sitting on the steps eating their lunches. Mrs. Allen stands on the grass watching with both hands on her hips.

Beau has his lunch box with the Partridge Family on it. Peanuts has her's with Snow White and The Seven Dwarves on it. Inside both boxes are apples, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches wrapped in white paper napkins, and pull-top cans of pepsi. Beau has

cheese doodles in a small plastic sandwich bag. Peanuts has barbecue ruffles-potato chips in a small clear plastic sandwich bag.

Beau: (smiling) I always did love peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

Peanuts: (smiling) Me too, especially the crunchy kind.

Beau: Looks like you got potato chips.

Peanuts: Yeah, a few. I like barbeque.

Beau: Can I have some of yours? I'll trade you some cheese doodles for some.

Peanuts: Why don't you ask that other girl for some?

Beau: (*huffs*) What other girl? Where?

Peanuts: The one with the long black hair I saw you talking with the other day.

Beau: You mean Donna Darlin'?

Peanuts: I guess that's her name...(*pouting expression*)

Beau: Well now, she's the wicked witch, I tell you!

Peanuts: (*hard look*) Why-you call her that, boy?

Beau: She has an old pot out back she found in a trash pile down in the woods, and is always cooking up spells in it at recess. You hat-n't seen that?

Peanuts: No, but she sure is a pretty witch, boy. I've seen that!

Beau: Naw Peanuts, you're crazy like one! Witches are old and ugly. She's not that pretty, I tell you.

Peanuts: Well do tell! If the witches don't get you, then the YaHoo 'N the Flea-backs surely will!

Beau: Flea-backs don't dare mess with the likes of me, girl!

Peanuts: Well they will, boy, you just wait, and them YaHoos 'll be right in there with 'em when the time comes.

Beau: Aw, I'm not worried a bit, now gal! Look at me, Peanuts (*holds his arm up, grabs his right bicep*) I'm all fire and muscle!

Peanuts: I hear you a-talkin' yer honey-pot full. I tell ya that much.

Beau and Peanuts complete their lunch. They close up their tin boxes. They toss away their trash into a nearby can. They place their boxes back onto the bookshelf. The other students put their boxes up on the same shelf. They head outside through the back door. Beau and Peanuts step into the restroom. They step back out into the classroom. Mr. and Mrs. McNeil are waiting for them by the restroom doors.

Mrs. McNeil: (*glaring down hard*) You stay right here, gal, and go on outside with the others.

Peanuts exits

Mr. McNeill: (*glancing down, scowl on his face*) Boy, you follow me, son. We've a serious bone to pick.

The two walk out the back door, down the steps, and on farther back toward the woods. Mr. McNeil walks closely behind. Beau swallows hard.

Beau: Where are we going? Woods are thick. Snakes make me a-feared.

Mr. McNeil: Keep on walking forward, son. Don't ask questions.

Beau: Toward that old shed yonder, in them teeny scrub-oak trees?

Mr. McNeil: That's right, boy. Say nothing, (*pointing*) forward march, son!

Beau: *Sighs deeply.*

The three walk toward the shack ahead where the wood is cut, split, and stacked for the woodstove in the school house. Mr. McNeil carries a very flexible plum twig in his right hand.

Mr. McNeil: Son, you're gonna learn we got rules here at Virginia Dare Academy. We can't ignore what you did. Do you know what you did?

Beau: No, not really. What was so wrong about anything?

Mr. McNeil: Well, it's high time you learn. When one of us tells you to do something 'round hiah, then you N' ever-body else is gonna do it. You or nobody else round hiah, is gonna sluff about doing it. You hear me talking to you, boy?

Beau: Yeah.

Mr. McNeil: That 's sir, to you boy!

Beau: Yes sir, then!

Mr. McNeil: Now son, you bend over that wood pile there in front O' you, and hold on for dear life, 'cause I swear I'm gonna knock you slam into the trees yonder, if I can, so help me good-Lord in heaven above!

Beau sighs deeply. He bends over the wood pile. Mr. McNeil cuts him twelve sharp times with the switch. Beau squints hard, but never flinches. Mr. McNeil finishes switching him. Beau strains to stand straight again. He brushes himself off. He forces himself to smile.

Mr. McNeil: (*glares hard in astonishment*) Now boy, you go along and play with the Others, (*points*) and don't you dare get into trouble again.

Beau takes off running toward the school house yard. Beau runs out past the school house, back over to the edge of the woods where his friends Cl, Crook, Fish, and Gene are standing on the woods edge overlooking the baseball field.

Enter Gene Coffee

Gene Coffee: How now boys. Look what runs up on us here.

Fish: The bunny honey had his fluffy tail clipped.

CL: Clipped with a plum whip too, I should say.

Crook: (*smiles*) We may only dream of the reason why.

Beau: How now, saucy dogs!

Fish: Nothing, only talking.

Beau: 'Bout what? (*smiling inquisitively*)

CL: Plum whips and such.

Crook: Thunk we hear'd one a-smackin' down in the woodshed yonder ways.

Beau: (*Glances down, then back up, shrugs*); maybe.

Gene Coffee: Did you talk with her?

Beau: Who?

Gene Coffee: Why, your little ditty whitty, that's who.

Beau: In passing only.

Crook: (*chuckles*); What happened, puddin' pie?

Beau: Oh nothin', be quiet!

Fish: (*chuckles in sarcasm*) Well, your nuttin' shore got you a good ice whoopin', boy.
We all know that much !

All the boys laugh.

Beau: (*glancing down, back up*) My secret, your wonder, but my stress about anything is over with now. All of you can have that for me.

Fish: (*sighs deeply*) Anyway fellers, he's forgiven for his sins. Let's all lay off.

Beau: Let's all play something. We still have time.

Crook: Lets play on the Merry Go Round on the opposite side of the ball field!

The boys run across the ball field. They grab the Merry Go Round in different sections

where the seats are, running clockwise.

Fish: Lets get it going fast, now my saucy boys!

CL: Yeah, real fast now!

Crook: Faster than this, for sure!

Gene Coffee: Let's make it go so fast it gives us a good buzz!

Beau: We'll be drunk from all this goin' round 'N 'round soon.

All five boys quit running, jumping down to ride it around.

Fish: Wow, this is really fun!

Beau: I always did like these things.

Crook: It's slowing back down now boys.

Gene Coffee: I'd rather play wiffle ball on the pole yonder!

CL: Did you say one on the pole?

Gene Coffee: Yeah boy, see it yonder? (*pointing*) Let's go!

All four boys run toward the wiffle ball on the poll off thirty feet to the side. Beau remains behind. He pushes the Merry Go Round. Somebody approaches behind him. He snaps around.

Enter Flea-back

Flea-back: (*walking up*) Let's play, boy!

Beau: (*leaps up, backing away, gasps*) You look so weird to me! I mean, look at your scaly gray-green skin and your ugly lizard-like face. I'll say, you have some big sharp pointed ears and a small snout filled with sharp teeth. Where do you live-at anyway? I always hear'd you and your kind live in stick huts way down yonder somewhere in the woods, and them sticks are covered with horse dookie and mud.

Flea-back: (*Hard face*) Yeah? Well, I think you and your kind look weird too. Why on earth does Bermista ever say we had to go to school with you and yo gross go-rilla lookin' kind?

Beau: (*sneers his upper lip*) Who are you anyway?

Flea-back: Name 's Darwell, ta you, boy.

Beau: I don't know you. Where did you come from?

Darwell the Flea-back: I'm right there in your classroom, dook-poot! Let's play, boy.

Beau: Ok. I'll play with you. Let's go..

Beau begins pushing the Merry Go Round clockwise.

Darwell the Flea-back: No boy, get away from here! (*he shoves Beau away from the Merry Go Round*) We're going to push this thing this way!

The Flea-back pushes the Merry Go Round counter clockwise.

Beau: No boy, that's not right! If you ain't gonna do it right, then don't do it at all!

Beau grabs the ragged clothing of the Flea-back. Beau shoves him backward from the Merry Go Round. The Flea-back rushes over, grabbing Beau, pulling him back away from the Merry Go Round.

Beau: (*Screaming in rage*); That's what I hate about all of you. All any of you want to do is throw yer weight around and cause everybody else a bunch of trouble! Why do any of us have to go to school with the likes of you and them YaHoos?

The two trade punches. They make their way toward a clump of well trimmed yaupon hedge bushes out thirty feet from the playground area. The two fall into the bushes, struggling. The Flea-back gets on top of Beau. He sits up firmly on his chest.

Darwell the Flea-back: Now I've got you, you dirty rotten thievin' human! What are you goin' to do now?

Beau turns his head to the right side, closing his eyes, fully expecting to take a hard

punch into the left side of his head.

Darwell the Flea-back: You're gonna do what I tell you to do, boy, that's what!

Beau: *(Praying to himself in a whisper, eyes pinched tightly)*; Please Lord, show me the way out of this mess.

Beau opens his eyes. A tin pie pan is nestled in six inch high grass, with a large coil of fresh human fecal material wound into the center. Beau seizes the Flea-back's ragged flowery shirt with his right hand. He shakes him hard as a distraction. He seizes the loaded tin pie pan with his left hand. The Flea-back glances around to see what is heading toward him. Beau smashes the loaded pie pan hard directly into the Flea-back's face. The Flea-back slides off of his chest. Beau rubs the loaded pan all over his scaly face, being very careful to get it directly in his mouth and eyes. The Flea-back rolls from on top of his chest, spitting, gasping, screaming, and crying. Beau leaps up. He leaps backwards a few steps, out of any potential harm's way.

Darwell the Flea-back: Look what you've done to me! I hate you, filthy human!

Beau smiles at the Flea-back. Mrs. McNeil walks up to the playground suddenly from the school house.

Darwell the Flea-back: *(races hysterically forward)* Mrs. McNeil, look what he did to me!

Mrs. McNeil: Who did this to you?

Darwell the Flea-back: *(pointing toward Beau)* That human yonder did this to me!

Mrs. McNeil: Well, you run back to the school house and get cleaned up, and we'll call your Mumsie.

Mrs. McNeill: *(walks over, grabbing Beau hard by the left bicep)* Did you do this to him, boy?

Beau: *(smiles)*; You always did say for us to take up for ourselves, Mrs. McNeill, so I did!

Mrs. McNeil: Come with me, boy, back to that school house. *(shaking her head)* I declare I've ne'er seen the likes in all my years of teachin'. You'll be

grounded for at least a week.

Mrs. McNeil and both students exit

Scene 5

Several Weeks later....

School lets out. A small yellow school bus sits out by the paved road at the end of the dirt driveway. Several older students are on this bus from the upper-grade building, across from the library, in the back Beau and Fish don't know.

Fish has a much older sister attending school in the upper-grade building. She is riding the bus. When the other kids see her, they make a cross sign with their two index fingers. A thin, pale looking girl with dark brown hair, appearing wet and black when it does, enters the bus. Smiling warmly, she saunters over toward Beau. She sits down in the seat beside him.

Enter Girl

Girl: Hello there, good lookin'. I noticed you sitting there, and I couldn't help but walk over and speak. How are you?

Beau: I'm fine, what about you?

Girl: I'm getting along well. Who is your teacher?

Beau: Mrs. McNeil and Mrs. Allen.

Girl: Wow! Those ladies are fine teachers. I remember my days in their class. I had loads of fun back then, let me tell you. I've noticed you around there. How long have you been coming to school out here?

Beau: A few weeks.

Girl: A few weeks only? And you have all of these little girl friends? I've heard about it, you know. Word gets around.

Beau: Naw, not really. I don't have any girl friends.

Girl: What's your name, you good lookin' thing, you?

Beau: Beau.

Girl: Beau what?

Beau: Beau Weible. What's your's?

Girl: Beau Weible? That sounds like such a cool name! My name is Tonya, Tonya Timorous. Some people call me Tonya Fruit Loop, or Tonya Taboo, but that's a long story honey, for later on in time.

Beau: Wow, I've never heard of a name like that.

Tonya Timorous: (*smiles, chuckles*) Let me tell ya honey, it's a good name, 'cause I'm such a great person.

Beau: I hope so. We have enough YaHoos 'round here, let me tell you.

Tonya Timorous: YaHoos! You're so funny, little boy. What's a YaHoo?

Beau: You don't know?

Tonya Timorous: Never heard of such.

Beau: Do you like Flea-backs?

Tonya Timorous: Now, I've heard of them. They just started coming to our school way back when I was in first grade, over in the same building you are.

Beau: What grade are you in now?

Tonya Timorous: I'm old to you, honey. I'm way up in the fourth grade. I'll be in fifth not long in the future.

The bus screeches to a halt. Several students exit off. The bus rides along more. More students exit off. Fish and his sister exit off at his elegant doric columned mansion home

tucked away from the hard surfaced road in the woods.

Fish: *(As he exits off the bus);* See ya 'round Beau. Don't get into more trouble now.

Other students on the bus: Make the cross sign with their index fingers toward Fish's sister.

Beau: Ay-dios now. You know I won't.

The bus motors along. The bus stops. Tonya arises.

Tonya Timorous: *(sighs);* The yellow cheese wagon has halted. Will ya still be mine when I get back on in the morning? Or tomorrow afternoon?

Beau: Yeah, I'll be right here.

Tonya Timorous: Tootle-lue now, doll. Nice meeting you!

Beau: Yeah, I'll see ya around.

Tonya exits

Beau watches as Tonya walks off the school bus. Her faded cut off jeans tightly hug her narrow thighs, dancing along out the bus as she walks. Her plain black tee shirt and homemade sandals blend in well together. She exits off at a long narrow two rut road, reaching far down into tall standing oak, sycamore, poplar, and birch trees. The road turns sharply to the right in the distance.

Beau: *(Whispering out loud);* Where on earth is her house at? What kind of home does she live-in?

A few more weeks pass...

The bus picks Beau up at home. The bus pauses by the mailbox at this long narrow two rut road. Tanya Timorous enters. She sits down closely beside Beau.

Enter Tonya

Tonya Timorous: Well, here we are again. I feel I have known you for so long now.

Beau: We have learned much in our talk.

Tonya Timorous: Are you staying out of trouble?

Beau: Of course! I never get into trouble.

Tonya Timorous: That's not what I hear.

Beau: Well, almost never. I told you about this fight I got in with a Flea-back, didn't I?

Tomya Timorous: No, tell me all about it. I can't wait to hear about this now!

Beau: A big Flea-back walked up to me and shoved me away from the Merry Go Round. So we got into it.

Tonya Timorous: So what did you do?

Beau: You know where them-bushes are out from the Merry Go Round, right?

Tonya Timorous: (*chuckles*) Yeah, sure...

Beau: He gets me down in there and sits on my chest.

Tonya Timorous: (*gasps*) So what did you do then?

Beau: I prayed.

Tonya Timorous: (*laughing*); Were your prayers answered?

Beau: You darn tootin' they were. I looked over and saw a tin pie pan with a big snake of hockey wound right into the center!

Tonya Timorous: (*gasps*); So what did you do then?

Beau: I grabbed his ragged shirt with my right hand, then hit him square in the face with the pan on my left!

Tonya Timorous: (*laughs uncontrollably*); Oh my gosh, little boy, I can't believe you here!

Beau: Yeah, I really did that.

Tonya Timorous: Did your Mumzie find out?

Beau: Yeah, but she didn't do anything, since I won the fight. Had I lost she'd have whooped me for sure.

Tonya Timorous: That's so wild little boy.. *(laughing)* I've never heard of such a thing!

Beau: Well, you have now.

Tonya Timorous: (*smiling broadly while she stares at Beau*); So let me ask you something personal, here and now. When are you going to be my little boyfriend? I hear about your other little girl friends, but I have the ups on all of them now. I can tell you that much, for sure.

The short school bus slows, coming to a stop at the intersection between the library and the school house. Two buses are parked by the building where the upper grades are located. Students are exiting off these buses.

Tonya Timorous: Well, it's about that time again. I'll see you around. You can answer me later on.

Tonya exits the school bus

Beau: Yeah, I'll see you again this afternoon, if not sooner.

Beau exits the bus. He walks down the two rut dirt driveway to the old wood framed schoolhouse by himself. The other kids are congregating in front of the steps at the porch. He and Tonya are last getting off the bus. The schoolhouse door suddenly opens. Mrs. McNeil steps out onto the wooden planks, shaking her hand-bell for class to begin.

Enter Miss McNeil

Jing a ling ring! Jing a ling ring! Jing a ling ring!

The students line up, walking one by one through the doorway past Mrs. McNeill

Mrs. McNeil: Good morning, hurry, classes will soon begin and you'll be late!

The students scatter. They take their seats at their proper desks. The desks are

arranged in rows going across the room the short way, facing the chalkboard. Mrs. McNeil and Mrs. Allen stand before the chalkboard. The class quietens down.

Enter Mrs. Allen

Mrs. Allen: Class, before we commence with our lessons for the day, we have a special treat for you. I'm going to be doing a little presentation for you in company with yours truly!

Mrs. Allen holds her right hand out. Crook arises from his seat. He walks up to the front of the classroom wearing a broad smile. Mrs. Allen stoops down. She turns on a record player. A pleasant tune plays. The two commence moving in tune with the rhythm.

Mrs. Allen: (sings) When this old world gets me down and there's no love to be found, I close my eyes and soon I find I'm in a playground in my mind, where the children laugh and children play, and we sing good songs all day.

Crook: (sings) My name is Michael, I've got a nickel, I've got a nickel shiny and new. I'm gonna buy me-a load of candy, now that's what I'm gonna do.

Mrs. Allen: (sings) In the wonders that I find in the playground in my mind, in a big world that used to be, close your eyes now and follow me, where children laugh and children play and we sing songs all day.

Crook: (sings) My gal is Sherry, when we get married, we're gonna have a baby or two. We're gonna let 'em visit their grandma, now that's what we're gonna do.

Mrs. Allen: Sing along with us now! (sings) Living in a world that I left behind, happy little children in the playground in my mind. See the little children? See how they play in the playground in my mind?

The whole class: (sings) Tra la la la la la, our time is now, let us show you how, while we can play all day in the sweet sunshine.

Mrs. McNeil: Isn't that such a pretty song? It sure causes me to think long and hard about everything. It doesn't seem that long ago in the past, to Mrs. Allen and myself, for sure.

Norma Bently: What are we going to do today, teacher?

Mrs. Allen: We are going to write some poetry. You know, spring is getting closer. Easter time will be here soon. It seems like yesterday since we had Christmas.

Mrs. McNeil: Think about springtime and Easter. Think about clover and shamrock. Do all of you remember what the lucky clover looks like?

The whole classroom: That's the four leaf clover, Mrs. McNeil!

Mrs. McNeil: That's so right! Now green is the color of spring. You know, there is a country that loves green. It's an island. If you remember, an island is a piece of land surrounded by water. What island is that? Do you remember? I'll give you a hint. It's the island of Leprechauns and elves, artists and famous writers. What island is it?

The whole classroom: Ireland, Mrs. McNeil!

Mrs. McNeil: Ireland is our land, when we all get right down to it. Probably most of the people in this room had people who came over from Ireland. Surely a small piece of Ireland lives in us all! So, let's cultivate our celtic imagination! Go now to the bookshelf and grab a piece of paper.

The class lines up, single file by the book shelf in the center of the room. Each student grabs a piece of paper. The student walks back to his or her desk. They settle down.

Mrs. Allen: Now, let's see who can write the very best poem about spring time, family, Ireland, shamrocks, four leaf clover, leprechauns, or Easter. I will ask five of the eighth grade students who score the best in English to make anonymous selections. The students who write the best poems shall have their poetry submitted to The Times Messenger NewsPaper.

The class sits down. The students begin writing. Several students say they don't want to write. Mrs. McNeil allows them to draw and color. Beau is about halfway through writing his poem.

Jing a ling ring! Jing a ling ring! Jing a ling ring!

The door is already open. Miss. McNeil is standing on the porch, shaking the hand bell.

Norma Bently: (*slurs*); It's break time, let's go. I want to find me a four leaf clover!

Norma arises, staggering and muttering. She attempts to run out the door. The other students follow one by one, walking across the porch and down the steps, out into the yard surrounding the school house. Norma walks over to the picnic table in the woods edge in the direction of the small baseball field. Around the picnic table are Twyla Clothcutter, Gene Coffee, Lisa Lamedame, Crook, Beau, Peanuts, and Dona Darling. Norma Bently staggers and limps around the table.

Norma Bently: *(slurs)*; The singing was good. You done fine, Crook boy!

Crook: Well, thankyou Norma. *(smiles)* Its so good of you to say kind things to me this morning.

Norma: Can I give you a kiss, Crook boy?

Crook: Sure, kiss me right here! *(Slapping, pointing to his left cheek)*.

Norma Bently: places both arms around Crook;s neck, kissing him heavily on the left cheek. Laughing, cheerful.

Crook: That was good Norma. I might be all yours before the day is done here.

Norma: Well, you can have more. I'll save all of mine just for you.

The others at the table smile and snicker among themselves. Beau and Peanuts step slightly away to the side.

Gene Coffee: Where are you two going off to?

Beau: *(glancing toward Gene)*; We have a few things to talk about between ourselves.

Peanuts: *(sad)*; I hear things about you, Beau.

Beau: Like what?

Peanuts: Upsetting things, things not nice for a girl to hear about her beau.

Beau: What have I done now, brown cow?

Peanuts: I heard all about Tonya Timorous.

Beau: Who 's that?

Peanuts: Beau, now don't play me, boy. These gals talk around here. I know about you walking with her all around hereabouts, boy.

Beau:(*shrugs*) So what if I did?

Peanuts: (*Sobs into tears*); That's it, boy, I'm gone! All you have to do is say so. Many a boy, I tell you, would love the likes of me.

Beau: Peanuts now, please no... I walked around some with that girl, but she's too old for me.

Peanuts: But I heard more, Beau now.

Beau: Oh Peanuts, what on earth did you hear now?

Peanuts: I heard you were seen walking with her down to the kissing tree.

Beau: No, we didn't. She asked me too, but I never did.

Peanuts: I know we haven't seen one another for two or three weeks now. I've been busy, and so have you, but still Beau...

Beau: You're right, Peanuts. Why don't you and me go a-walkin'?

Peanuts: When?

Beau: Right now. We'll only be out a few minutes.

Peanuts: (*hesitates*); Well..OK.

Norma has the others at the picnic table all cheering for Crook and the kisses she is giving him. Arm in Arm Beau and Peanuts saunter past the ball field, the small bleacher stand, the tires buried in the ground for an obstacle course down a ways. At the wood stand down from the obstacle course, they step into some small oaks for some distance. To the right among small pine trees stands a massive live oak tree. Limbs are so huge they can't support their own weight, flopping onto the ground. The trunk is six feet thick, standing one hundred feet tall.

Beau: So there it is Peanuts.

Peanuts: What is it?

Beau: The famous kissing tree, of course!

Peanuts: Wow, it's a biggie for sure.

Beau: Yes, it is.

Peanuts: (*frowns suddenly*); Why did you take me here?

Beau: So I could be here with you, of course.

Peanuts: But we've been separated for so long. We're not going-together anymore, remember?

Beau: How long will it take to fix the damage I've done?

Peanuts: (*pauses, thinks*) Hmm, maybe all the way to Easter time.

Beau: How long is that?

Peanuts: A month, I think.

Beau: Remember the yellow ribbon?

Peanuts: Yes, it's a tough one to forget.

Beau: What exactly did it mean, now?

Peanuts: (*smiles*); I looked it up in the library the other day. Some man was a prisoner up in Fort Fisher after the war. He wrote a letter to his girlfriend. He'd been gone for a long time too. So he writes to her and tells her if she still wants him, to tie a yellow ribbon round the ole oak tree by her cabin. When he gets out in a week or two and rides his horse past her cabin, if he don't see that ribbon, then he'll keep on a-riding and consider it over with between them.

Beau: Now, that's a great idea, don't you think Peanuts?

Peanuts: (*Shocked, wide eyes*); What's a great idea, crazy boy?

Beau: Why don't you tie a yaller ribbon 'round this old live oak tree here in three weeks or so, if'n you still want me to be yours. Late on good-Friday, when I come back here during last break or so , if'n I see that yaller ribbon, I'll walk 'round the ole oak tree looking for you on the other side there. (*Smiles, head thrown back*); We'll make our new reunion official then.

Peanuts: (*Smiles suddenly*); I know where some yellow ribbon is already. A big roll of it lays inside the bookcase in our classroom.

Beau: (smiling) The stars must have lined up for us, don't ya think so, Peanuts?

Peanuts: (*smile suddenly droops into a snarl*) But you'll have to earn your keeps with me, boy! You want a ribbon 'round that ole live oak tree yonder boy, then you had better give me a good reason to put it there.

Beau: Well, you know me good by now, happy gal. I always see my job through.

Lights dim, curtains fall, Beau and Peanuts exit

Act 2

Scene 1

Several days pass.
One Friday Morning...

Beau is standing by the highway at the end of a long dirt road up from where he lives with his grandparents and his Mum. The bus pauses. He enters. The bus pauses by the road to Tonya Timourous's house. She enters. She wears long faded jeans and a dark colored tee shirt. She sits down closely with Beau in the bus seat.

Enter Tonya Timorous

Tonya Timorous: So how is my little lover boy doing today?

Beau: Good, I guess. Mumzie tells me good is as one does.

Tonya Timorous: *(Whispers)*; I have something neat for you.

Beau: What? What kind of present do you have for me?

Tonya Timorous: (picks up a made over cardboard Burger King crown, covered with red and gold cloth covered in gem-like stickers. Tonya places this upon his head); Here little boy. Did you think you'd ever be crowned king of anything?

Beau: *(chuckles, glances around)* What on earth is that for?

Tonya Timorous: I'm crowning you King of Kissers now, boy. You can really get a good girl's blood to flowing. Do you know that?

Beau: What? Why on earth?

Tonya Timorous: You're trained by the best! I got you broke-right, now boy.

Beau chuckles

Tonya Timorous: There have been many other men, now, but none have the up on you, honey.

Beau: *(smiling)* I have no words. Kill me with silence.

The bus brakes, grinding, making a sharp left turn. The bus screeches to a halt. The doors open. A clatter of excitement is occurring outside. Beau and Tonya are last to exit.

Tonya Timorous: *(smiling)* Well, I suppose I'll see you later on.

Beau: I don't know. Mumzie says she may pick me up today.

Tonya Timorous: Maybe we can meet up at one of our breaks.

Beau: Maybe then. We can walk around, look at the wild flowers, maybe find a four leaf clover.

Tonya Timorous exits the bus, waving back at Beau, walking to the left. Beau exits the bus. He moves directly ahead toward the old school house. The students are gathering on, and in front of the porch. Beau is halfway there. The school house doors fling open. Mrs. McNeill steps out onto the porch, ringing the handbell. Chattering students walk up the steps and inside the school house, single file. Beau is the last one to walk up the steps.

Mrs. McNeill: How now, son? You're nearly late.

Beau: I didn't mean to be. I arrived when the bus did.

Mrs. McNeill: Whether you meant to be or not, is irrelevant. Bus or no bus, son, one must always be on time.

Beau: *(Smiles)*; I will be next time, Mrs. McNeill.

Mrs. McNeill: *(Smiles pleasantly)*; I'm sure you will be.

Beau walks across the threshold, over to his seat. A white piece of construction paper with a big black spot in the center lays in his desk seat. Beau is holding this up before his face. He turns toward Twyla Clothcutter sitting calmly behind him.

Enter Twyla Clothcutter

Beau: What on earth is this thing about?

Twyla Clothcutter: *(chuckles)* You've been black-spotted boy. A target on-spot.

Beau: What does that mean?

Twyla Clothcutter: I know you've played pirates before.

Beau: Yes, every summer. We live a pirates life when me and my mates pole raft for weeks at a time down the deep run in Francis Marion swamp.

Twyla Clothcutter: Well?.., and you don't know what the black spot is?

Beau: I've never heard of such a thing.

Twyla Clothcutter: (*chuckles*) Remember last week how every day Mrs. Allen has been reading Treasure Island to us after lunch recess break?

Beau: Yeah, sure. It's a really good book, I think. Maybe my favorite.

Twyla Clothcutter: (*firm face*) Well, you should know all about that black spot then.

Beau: (*gasps*) I don't though, Twyla, come on!

Twyla Clothcutter: Well, you should pay attention more, then. Stop acting so crazy around here, flirting with these girls, and be productive for a change.

Beau: Yeah? My grades are OK. I made A's last nine weeks.

Twyla Clothcutter: Yeah maybe, but did you learn anything? An A on paper can mean a great big D shoved hard into the ear, and a flat out F in the head. Know what I mean there, jelly bean? (*sneers, shakes her head*) I honestly doubt you do.

Beau: Tell me though, Twyla. I know you know. Come on out with it.

Twyla Clothcutter: (*Smiles*); OK, being short about it then.., somebody has it out for you, Boy. I'm so glad its you and not me.

Beau: Who has it out for me?

Twyla Clothcutter: I don't know who, boy! Don't you dare be so rude as to ask me so.

Beau: Come on now! I know you know, Twyla. Tell me now.

Twyla Clothcutter: (*Smiling intimidatingly*); Think a minute... It might be a YaHoo.

Beau: Make a bet with me. Which one? I kin take a hint.

Twyla Clothcutter: I don't know, crazy boy! I'll bet it's a great big, tall, ugly one, however.

Beau: Does he come to school often?

Twyla Clothcutter: Not much, but he always haunts the woods around here while we're in school.

Beau: You must be a-talkin' 'bout Klavin Clodhopper.

Twyla Clothcutter: I never said that. Don't mix my name into your whirlwind darlin.

Beau: (*Smiles*); Thankyou Twyla.

Twyla Clothcutter: Keep me out of it, boy! I never said a thing.

Beau: I'll fix him, if he wants trouble.

Twyla Clothcutter: Listen at yer-self here. You're not doodley, doggy boy. Who do you think you're foolin'?

Beau: Well, our gang is ready for trouble. Let it come along as it may.

Twyla Clothcutter: Like how, crazy boy? You're itchin' for a switchin'. I know that much.

Beau: reaching into his denim overalls pocket, pulling out a two and a half foot leather quirk made of three cords tightly braided.

Beau: We all have one of these things. If it will drive a horse or a stubborn mule, it 'ill surely drive away a snarling YaHoo or a saucy Flea-back.

Twyla Clothcutter: (*sneers*) Boy, don't you dare make me laugh so. You'll get braided.

Mrs. McNeill walks, standing before the chalkboard at the front of the classroom.

Mrs. McNeill: Class, now today is a beautiful day. The songbirds are singing, the

wisteria hangs heavily in the air. The daffodils are beginning to break the Ground, along with the gladiolus, the tulips. Look when we go outside! Have you been out to the yaupon bushes over by the swings, the seesaws, and the Merry Go Round? The daffodils are breaking the ground in the bed there. All around the upper-grades building the tulips are beginning to break ground, the gladiolas, the daisies. Over by the woods the wild-flowers are coming up. Have you noticed?

Gene Coffee: (*Raises his right hand*); Yeah Miss. McNeill, over by the ditch along the woods, we found sundew patches growing!

Whayne Whiner: (*Raises his right hand*); Yeah Miss McNeill, my older brothers, James and Billy, found a patch O' fly-traps growing in the woods down on the other side of the ditch in the peat moss.

Leon the Flea-back: (*Raises his hand*); Yeah, Mrs. Allen and Mrs. McNeill, me and my brothers found a whole patch of Jack-in-The-Pulpits and Pink Honey Pitchers growing over by the creek down in the woods behind the school house where we live.

Mrs. McNeill: Well, that's all great. What other sights are you seeing this time of the year, class?

Cynthia the Flea-back: (*Raises her right hand*); Yeah, Mrs. McNeill, we see beaver building their lodges over on the creek where we live. They must be making nests or somethin'.

Leon the Flea-back: (*smirks*) Where do you live at gal? You don't live anywhere near me.

Cynthia the Flea-back: I live in the pole-lodge over on Lesaine Hill, by Boo Branch, Po French.

Leon the Flea-back: Who you callin' Po French, booty breath? I know you don't live near me, Cynthia gal!

Cynthia the Flea-back: You shet-up to me, boy! I hope this big ole booty takes yo breath, pig!

Marvin the Flea-back: Yeah gerl, you think you somethin' jest because you live in a pole

lodge, rather than a stick house like we do. Miss Lytle ova yonda, gives you her cast away clothes to wear. I know that much. Cuz you so big you can fit into 'em.

Cynthia the Flea-back: You shet-up to me too, Marvin! You don't know anything. I don't even know who Miss. Lytle is, with yo' big fat self! You make Fatso look underweight.

Marvin the Flea-back: You sit there an' tell a lie, gerl. You know who it is. It's that cripple human woman who works fo' the church, who always comes out and gives everybody things. You know, and we know too! So don't you dare tell us another lie, gerl!

Leon the Flea-back: Say your name for us, Cynthia, say it...

Cynthia the Flea-back: Boot-a-coot.

Leon the Flea-back: Boot-a-coot? Boy, have we hear'd it all now!

The whole class bursts out into laughter.

Cynthia the Flea-back: Whut-chu laughing at? Who do all of you think you are?

Marvin the Flea-back: I swear it sounds just like boot-a-coot when you say yer name!

Mrs. McNeill: Now, now class. We all need to get busy. Idle hands are the devil's workshop. I see the cold, hard truth in those words, in children and adults every day. So let us walk over to the bookcase there in the center of the room and grab us a plain sheet. Pencils are there by the side of the paper stack. We got the new fresh supplies recently. We must make good use of 'em now.

The class arises, and walks toward the bookcase. One by one students pick up a plain clean sheet of paper and a pencil. Each student walks back toward their seats. The last student takes her seat. Mrs. Allen speaks.

Mrs. Allen: Now class, think of spring. Think of something that makes you really happy. Now what we want you to do is draw us a nice picture of it so you can show and tell the others about what you saw or felt over these past few days.

Mrs. McNeill places plastic containers filled with colorful crayons on the long teacher's desk to the left of the chalkboard.

A few minutes pass..

Students are dedicated to their drawing

Mrs. Allen: So let us see.. What have we done now? Who will be the first to stand up beside their desk and tell us?

Tiny Teresa Tin Pecker: My daddy has planted us a big flower garden. He lets me help him put out seeds and till the ground.

Mrs. Allen: So what is your picture of?

Tiny Teresa Tin Pecker: It's daddy's flower garden!

Mrs. Allen: Color it and the picture will look great!.. Who's next?

Fame Priest: *(holding his picture up)*; My picture is of a deer my daddy shot. It was a big twelve point buck! It lays on the tailgate of my daddy's pickup truck. It fed the whole family for mite-near a month. We are still eating soup from the bones now.

Mrs. Allen: Anybody else ready to tell us what your picture is about?

Beau: I'll tell you mine.

Mrs. McNeil: That will be nice. Give it a shot.

Beau: Well, mine is of a big oak tree out somewhere, with a great big yellow ribbon tied around it.

Beau glancing around the room, then quickly toward Peanuts

Beau: I think when people join hands after being gone a while, it really makes everybody happy all over again.

Mrs. Allen: *(shaking the handbell by the door)* Ring, ring, ring! Ring, ring, ring! Ring,

ring, ring!

Mrs. McNeill: It's break time. Everybody line-up now.

Students race to line up single-file at the door. Mrs. McNeill opens the door. The students exit out in a single file. Each student steps down the steps, racing out into the school yard. Others are hanging around on the porch. Beau meets Peanuts. They walk along the woods edge by the ball field.

Peanuts: I have problems with you, Beau.

Beau: Like what?

Peanuts: All of this trouble you keep getting into. I wonder if'n you ain't crazy myself.

Beau: It's been a while now. I'm doing better.

Peanuts: You lie, it's something every day, Beau. I hear about the stir betwixt yer gang and them YaHoos.

Beau: It's a small one only.

Peanuts: If it ain't them, boy, it's them Flea-backs..

Beau: Maybe, from time to time. Most days, however, are peaceful and calm, Peanuts.

Peanuts: No Beau, I heard all about that deal between you and that really ugly greenish gray Flea-back, with the dog's snout face. I think his scaly skin and his breath smells horribly bad. Then he drags that awful tail around everywhere he goes.

Beau: Well., (*he shrugs*), all of 'em are like that.

Peanuts: Not as much so as that one.

Beau: Oh yeah?

Peanuts: But still Beau, you didn't have to do what you did.

Beau: I had no other choice. He was sitting on top of me.

Peanuts: Ooh, gross boy! Your tales disgust me.

Beau: Yeah, and how!

Peanuts: Still, you got in trouble.

Beau: Yeah?, but it passed.

Peanuts: Tell me truly, Beau. Promise me you won't get into trouble any more.

Beau: No, I'll try not to, now.

Peanuts: Promise me!

Beau: OK..

Peanuts: Say you promise me that you won't.

Beau: OK.

Peanuts: Say it, or our union is off for good.

Beau: Really? For good is a long time, Peanuts.

Peanuts: Yeah Beau. My parents think you are the most terrible boy around. They warn me all the time not to have anything else to do with you.

Beau: You don't take up for me?

Peanuts: Of course I do! Promise me....

Beau: OK, I promise you.

Peanuts: (*With a hard look on her face*); Promise me what?

Beau: (*smiles, then frowns*) Promise you I won't get into any more trouble.

Peanuts: (*great big smile*) Great Beau! You just don't know how happy hearing you say that makes me.

Lights dim

Peanuts & Beau exit the stage

Scene 2

The students are all seated and settling down. Mrs. McNeill and Mrs. Allen stand at the front of the classroom with the chalkboard behind them.

Enter Mrs. McNeil

Mrs. McNeill: It's such a pretty day and I honestly feel we should begin by giving the Good Lord, thanks for our place in life, and the freedoms we have. One day in the future all of this you see in here and around on the outside, may be gone, and you'll all wish dearly that you could come back and relive today's experience.

The students bow their heads, after a few minutes, they lift their heads up.

Mrs. Allen: I know the Supreme Court outlawed us from praying like that, but I don't really care because the constitution gives us the right, and it's the law of this land, not the Supreme Court. So, we don't know what nation's laws The Supreme Court is trying to impose, cause it sure isn't ours.

Mrs. McNeill: Look class, we really are in a good mood today. Let's begin with some listening comprehension. I'm going to put on a record and let all of you listen. Go get a sheet of lined paper and tell me what this story is about. Can you do that?

The whole class: Yes Mrs. McNeill!

The class arises one by one. Each student picks up a piece of lined paper from the bookshelf. Each student walks back to their desks. The class settles down. Mrs. Allen puts a large record on the record player. She snaps the switch on. The students are totally silent. A narrator tells the story of Peter Rabbit. The record finishes playing. The students begin writing as hard as they can. A few students are finished writing after several minutes..

Mrs. McNeill: (*Shakes the handbell*); Ring, ring! Jing a ling a ling!

All of the students run to line up single file by the door of the classroom. Mrs. McNeill opens the left hand door. The students walk out the door, across the porch, down the steps, and into the yard. Crook, CL, Fish, and Beau head toward the ball field.

Mrs. Allen: Don't forget to listen for the bell letting you know the first break is over!

In the distance not far from the woods directly across, three YaHoos and three Flea-backs are gathered up around an old wooden hog's head barrel. They glare in the direction of the four humans.

Leon the Flea-back: Look at 'em, boys. They all think they're such hot stuff around here.

Airic Linberger: (*gruff voice*) Yeah, especially the one they call Beau. Look at him yonder. I can't stand the way he walks, even lookin' at him from here.

Zebby the chief Flea-back: I don't care much for him or the one they call Fish. Look how goofy Fish looks, with his soda bottle-bottom glasses and his side-walled haircut.

Klavin Clodhopper: He looks and acts like Herman Munster to me. You seen that show? And Beau there, leave him to me. That son of a dog is all mine, boys. I feel like doin' some slappin' and stompin' today.

The four students standing by the woods edge

CL: Look at the YaHoo and the Flea-backs yonder.

Crook: What a sight for sore eyes!

Fish: Ain't that ole Klavin I see?

CL: I'm a-feared it is, boys. I swear i felt the rumble and heard the thunder when he took a step.

Fish: How many grades did he fail?

Crook: Three, I think. I hear he weighs in at 220 pounds. All of 'em have failed at least one grade. I don't even see why the headmaster allows 'em to come here. Why do we have to be around any of 'em? Somehow all of it ain't fair. Mumzie, Pap, grandma nor grandpa had to, so why do we? Why can't we choose not to be around 'em? Where is the freedom?

Fish: The Bermeister says they must be allowed here.

Crook: Like my Pap says, the Burmeister can go toot-a-flute, far as I'm concerned.

Beau: (*gazing off into the distance*) Let's walk over there.

Fish: (*gasps*) Are you crazy? Over where?

Beau: By the hogs head yonda-ways.

Fish: You are crazy. What's with you, Beau?

Beau: They keep lookin' this way. I wonder what they want.

Fish: Klaven is a monster. He'll kill the likes of you, skinny boy.

Beau: Yeah maybe. You in with me?

Fish: I'll watch this one.

Beau: (*Glancing around*); Anybody in with me?

Beau: (*glancing around, both arms open, shrugs*) Fine then. I wonder what it is they want.

Beau smiles as he commences walking across the ball field toward the hogs head.

Lights dim, scene changes: *Over by the hog's head.*

Enter Marvin the flea-back

Marvin the Flea-back: Look-out now, Klaven', he heard you call his name.

Klaven Clodhopper: He'll make fine toilet fodder. I'll chaw him up and spit him back out.

Leon the Flea-back: Look out now, he's a wild one, doo-lottie!.

Kalven Clodhopper: *(smiling, shaking his head)* I'm lickin' my chops, boys.

Beau takes his time walking. He makes it out to the hogshead. His friends and everybody else stands watching in the distance.

Beau: *(smiling a big smile)* Well, a big hello to all of you. I don't get to speak much to any of you.

Leon the Flea-back: Did we ever ask for anything?

Beau: No, but the way all of you kept looking over our way, I thought you might need help of some kind, and there was something I could help you with.

Criss the hippie: To tell the truth, if we ever did need help, we could find better than the likes of you to ask.

Beau: *(chuckles, shrugs)* Now that wasn't nice for you to say to one who came to help. What am I to think?

Klaven Clodhopper: *(steps away, stands before Beau. Both arms are crossed)* I don't care what you think. You need to roll out punk.

Beau: What if I don't want to? What if I like-it where I'm at?

Klaven Clodhopper: *(grinning);* Now watch the fly buzzing. See him buzz high and to your left?

Bzzzzzz
cause if he don't get you—.

Klaven Clodhopper: (*backhands Beau across the face suddenly*) Then the left hand will.

Beau left back fists Klaven hard underneath his nose and across his left jaw with his right fist. Klaven swings a hard right haymaker punch. Beau ducks. Klaven swings a left haymaker punch. Beau ducks that one. Beau pops back up, he punches Klaven hard right across the jaw again, swinging his head to the left side. When Klaven turns back around, he is enraged. Beau pulls out his quirk. He strikes Klaven hard across his chest.

Zebby the Flea-back: Get him Klaven. Don't let the likes of this human crud get the up
On you!

Crook: (*from the other side of the ball field*); Give him what for! He deserves it!

Zebby the Flea-back: (*tosses Klaven a quirk to use*); Make him work for it, Kalven!

Klaven strikes Beau across the chest. Beau strikes Klaven across the chest again. His quirk cuts the wind as it strikes. He strikes again from the opposite direction. Klaven begins running backwards to escape Beau and his quirk. The Flea-back and the YaHoo cheer Klaven on. All of the students gather by the woods edge in the distance to watch. They cheer Beau on. Peanuts runs away to hide.

Beau drives Klaven backwards from the hogshhead all the way to the asphalt top beside the upper grades building. Students of all ages play basketball and hopscotch on the blacktop. Klaven falls down trying to get away. Beau whips him across the face five times, slashing the wind in audible strokes as he cuts. Deep slash marks appear across Klaven's face on both sides. Klaven rolls to get away from Beau's fury. He leaps to his feet, running away from him across the asphalt top.

Klaven Clodhopper: You wait, human scum, I'll get you yet! I'll kill you!

Leon the Flea-back Yeah, we know where your weak spot is!

Mary Cromartie: Tremble in your brogans, Beau! You're rough and tough, but not that much!

Criss the hippie: When you are toast and our human slave, all of us then will have it made. For then upon your head it shall be written, his poor heart was heavily smitten. You may then no longer brag nor so proudly boast,

Since the day your heart was cooked by the old lamp post!

Klaven Clodhopper: (pulls a jack-knife, drawing it back, rushes toward Beau) You wait!
I'll cut your throat, pig!

Lights dim, Beau. Klaven and the flear-backs exit the state

Scene 3

Enter Mrs. McNeil

Mrs. McNeill: (*shaking the hand bell*); *Ring a ling! Ring a ling! Ring a ling!*

The Flea-back and the Yahoo walk away toward the woods. Beau Weible turns around and walks back toward the school house. Walking up ahead of him he sees Peanuts walking toward the steps with several other students.

Enter Beau & Peanuts

Beau: Peanuts! I was looking for you. Where were you?

Peanuts: (pretending she doesn't hear him); keeps on walking forward.

Beau: Peanuts! I know you hear me.

Peanuts: (*Pauses, turns around, nearing tears*) You promised me, Beau!

Beau: Yeah, but I didn't mean to. That fat YaHoo lashed me first.

Peanuts: But you promised me.. You're not even any good for your word.

Beau: I want to talk it over.

Peanuts: No, I have nothing more to say!

Beau: Peanuts! Look how far we've gone.

Peanuts: No! Leave me alone. (*Sobbing*) I don't want to have nothing more to do with you!

Peanuts runs up the stairs and into the school house. Beau chases after her.

Beau: Peanuts! Why are you turning me away like this?

Peanuts walks across the door threshold into the classroom. She takes her seat in the third row, third seat from the rear. Beau hops into the seat beside her.

Beau: Peanuts! Let's talk. We can begin all over again.

Peanuts: No! Go away from me, boy. We have nothing more to talk about.

Enter Gene Coffee.

Gene Coffee: (*walks up and pauses*) You're in my seat now. Get up!

Beau: Peanuts please. Please don't turn me away!

Peanuts: (*Crying*); Go away from me, boy!

Beau arises, walks away from her. Mr. McNeill walks up from nowhere, grabbing him hard by the bicep of his right arm. Beau snaps around, looking him directly in the face, astonished.

Enter Mr. McNeil

Mr. McNeil: Son, you step outside with me, now, this minute.

Beau walks out the door of the school. He pauses on the porch with Mr. McNeill. Mr. McNeill grabs him hard again hard on the right arm in the bicep. ;

Mr. McNeill: (*moving directly down into Beau's face*); I've just never seen the likes of a student like you. It's something, every day! At the rate you are going , you'll be in prison before you're twenty one. What on earth are we going to do with you, son? I'm calling your Mumzie today, and we're going to seriously discuss removing you from the academy. I know all about that big fight.

We've all but banished Klaven. He has been kicked out so many times, but he hasn't been raised up right and doesn't know any better. You do though, son. I know your Mumsie and your grandparents well. I'm thinking it will be a step by step process. I'm going to discuss three days home for you, with them. You see, Klaven and that whole crowd he's in cahoots with, doesn't have the grades to be here, really. You do, son! I'm afraid being at home will harm you. I'm calling her right now. We'll work something out. I might give you one more chance, but I'm still calling her today.

Exit Mr. McNeil

Beau holds his head down. He sulks back into class, when Mr. McNeill releases his arm. Slowly he plods over toward his seat in the second row, third seat from the front. He sits down. He glances over toward Peanuts. Peanuts quickly turns her head, shoving her nose high up into the air. Beau turns toward his left. A small, but somewhat pretty new girl with golden pig tails, a pallid complexion, and ice blue eyes sits in the seat beside him.

Enter New Girl

Beau: *(glancing toward the new girl)* Hello, how are you?

New girl: *(smiles)*; I'm fine, what about you?

Beau: I'm doing well, I suppose, all things considering.

New girl: Like what?

Beau: I'll tell you later.

New girl: Why not now, boy?

Beau: *(chuckles)* What's your name?

New girl: Puddin' Tane.

Beau: *(smiles)*; Awe, come on!

New girl: It's true.

Beau: What's true?

New girl: My name's Puddin' Tane.

Beau: Don't believe it.

New girl: 'Tis. What's your'n?

Beau: Beau.

New girl: That's a funny name.

Beau: Well, I told you mine, so you can tell me yours.

New girl: I did, boy.

Beau: Don't believe it.

New girl: Sandy then.

Beau: Sandy what?

New girl: Sandy Slinky, with the stinky pinky.

Beau: My word! I'll call you Sandy then. How's that?

New girl: That will work. Sandy is well and good.

Beau: Where are you from?

Sandy: The palace in the sun.

Beau: Come on!

Sandy: The hill by governor Owen's old manor home.

Beau: Yeah, near Columns Plantation Home?

Sandy: That's me.

Beau: Wow! Little rich girl, huh?

Sandy: For me to know and you to find out.

Mrs. McNeill walks in front of the chalkboard at the head of the class. She stoops down. She puts on a record. She stands back up.

Enter Mrs. Allen

Mrs. Allen: Today in class we are going to learn about the pioneers. We all think we have it so tough from time to time, but these people truly had life difficult. Can you imagine traveling across this whole country in a wagon? Well that is what these people did. They traveled across the whole country, leaving everything they knew, into a strange land. Well, we know about these people and what they experienced because of people like Laura Engals Wilder who kept notes and wrote books about their lives. That is what this record we are going to listen to today is about, Laura Engals Wilder, and her book, Little House on The Prairie. While you listen to the story, I just want you to imagine you are there with her, experiencing this. You know, in reality, it hasn't been that long ago. Eighty to ninety years isn't really all that long ago. Go pick up a piece of paper from the bookcase after listening, and write down what you think about this.

The students arise from their seats. They make their way to the bookcase. Each student grabs a piece of paper. One by one they make their way back to their desks. Once the class settles, Mrs. McNeill places the needle on the record. She turns on the knob for the record player to click on. The students listen attentively. When the record stops playing, the students begin writing. Every student has his or her dedicated attention to the paper before them.

Enter Gene Coffee

Gene Coffee: I've finished, teacher. *(Handing his paper over in Mrs. Allen's direction).*

Norma Bently: I've finished mine teacher!

Jimmy Tin Pecker: All you have are scribbles on your paper, girl!

Norma Bently: No I don't boy, I've done mine already!

Mrs. Allen: (*walking around collecting papers*) That's good! That's good! I see fine papers here.

Denine Demoiselle: I have mine done already!

Mrs. McNeill: (*ringing the hand bell*); *Jing a ling! Jing a ling! Jing a ling!*

Mrs. Allen: OK class, it's time for the first break now. Line up as usual by the door. We will continue with these papers and our discussion when we make it back into class. We also have some math we need to work on today, so let's go, Now!

The class runs toward the door, lining up in single file. Mrs. McNeil opens the left door when the last student steps into line. The students walk out one behind the other, across the porch, down the steps, and into the school yard. Once out on the porch, Beau is careful to walk up behind Sandy Slinky, following her down the steps.

Beau: Hello Sandy, how are you?

Sandy Slinky: Fine. I wanted to watch cartoons at home today. Do you like cartoons?

Beau: Yes.

Sandy Slinky: What's your favorite?

Beau: Bugs Bunny.

Sandy Slinky: I like him too.

Beau: I like Woody Woodpecker.

Sandy Slinky: Yeah, me too. (*Laughs*).

A girl walks up suddenly behind Sandy

Enter Kim

Sandy Slinky: (*turns around*) How are you doing today Kim?

Kim: I'm fine

Sandy Slinky: What did you get for that paper we are doing?

Kim: A few things here and there.

Sandy Slinky: (*gasps*) Like what?

Beau: Hey, why don't we walk out a ways toward the woods edge here?

Sandy looks over at him and laughs

Kim: (*Laughs*); Well, Laura Engals loved to move around.

Sandy Slinky: Her daddy played a fiddle.

Kim: I wonder if Laura liked to dance?

Beau: Hey, look at the new grass coming up over there! Let's have a look-see.

Both Sandy and Kim turn toward him and laugh

Kim: What did you get on those math problems the other day?

Sandy Slinky: I made a hundred. What about you?

Kim: I got ninety, I think.

Sandy Slinky: Gene got a hundred. (*gazes off, sighs*) He seems so intelligent.

Kim: I started reading more. I read Treasure Island all by myself.

Sandy Slinky: That's a hard one.

Beau: The air sure is heavy with a sweet smell this morning.

Sandy and Kim laugh

Sandy & Kim: That's wisteria.

Beau: I smell a rose in there, I believe.

Sandy Slinky: Hey Kim, you told me something about Gene the other day.

Kim: Yeah, he told me he saw a ghost the other night.

Sandy Slinky: Wow, a real ghost!

Kim: I sure believe in ghosts.

Sandy Slinky: Yeah, me too!

Beau: Hey, let me show you girls something.

Beau reaches into his pocket, pulling out three nice arrowheads and a rabbit's foot. Kim and Sandy glance over at him and laugh. The three head toward the small set of bleachers by the small ball field. When they make it there, they pause.

Kim: What did Mrs. Allen say we had to do when break is over?

Sandy Slinky: We're going to talk about them papers when we get back in, I think.

Beau: Hey, you know, grandpa says rabbit feet are for good luck, see?

Beau picks the dried and pressed rabbit's foot up, handing it over toward the girls.

Kim: *(draws back)* Ooo! Who got the rabbit?

Beau: Why, I did?

Sandy Slinky: How boy? You don't know how to use a gun.

Beau: No, I caught him on a wire.

Kim: A wire? What is that?

Beau: Well, grandpa showed me how to take the copper wire out of old electrical wire, then twist the wires to make a cable. He showed me how to set this out to catch things in.

Kim: Like what kind of things, boy?

Beau: Like rabbits, squirrels, birds, especially pigeons.

Kim: What do you do with them?

Beau: Make pies out of 'em.

Sandy and Kim: Oh please, boy!

Sandy and Kim explode into laughter

Beau: No, it's all true!

Sandy Slinky: Boy, you better go back and tell Peanuts that big one.

Beau: Yeah; I wish I could.

Kim: Now what's the matter? You heartbroken?

Beau: *Sighs deeply.*

Sandy & Kim: (exploding into laughter) Shame, shame, shame, on you two!

Mrs. McNeill: (*ringing the hand bell*) *Ring-a-ling! Ring-a-ling! Ring-a-ling!*

It's time for class now! Let's go! Let's go!

The students run toward the porch, then make a single file line. Mrs. McNeill opens the door. The students walk inside, each to his own specific seat. Beau and Sandy Slinky sit in their seats. Beau turns toward Sandy.

Beau: Hey Sandy, look at that funny hat Norma is wearing.

Sandy Slinky: Sticks her tongue out at Beau. Laughs.

Some time passes...

Beau: *(turns back around)* Sandy, what were we supposed to be doin' now?

Sandy Slinky: *(Sticks her tongue out at Beau. Laughs);* Be quiet to me, boy. Ever-body knows how full of loblolly you are around here.

Scene 4

Sunday morning

Beau, CL, and Fish are at the steps in front of a small three hundred year old wood framed church on a slight land roll, tucked away on the edge of an oak stand. All around the church are white wooden poles three feet high, sticking in the ground for people to hitch their horses on. When one stands at the road, looking toward the large brown oak double doors of the church, to the right is a graveyard with its stone slabs sticking up among scattered oak trees.

At the edge of the graveyard by the hard surfaced road is a tall, three foot diameter hickory tree. The ground is covered with hickory nuts around the tree. Cars are pulling in and parking by the hitching posts. A horse and buggy is tied to a large three feet diameter red oak between the church on the right side, and the graveyard. People are walking up the steps and through the double doors. The men don suits, ties, and white or gray fedora hats. The women are donning 1920's style ankle length dresses and sunbonnets with black, blue, or green ribbons tied around them. Beau's mother opens the door of the big blue Marquis Mercury, parked underneath the hickory tree facing the church doors. The bell knells energetically from the steeple. Fish and CL are standing in front of the steps.

Enter CL

CL: What did any of you do yesterday?

Beau: *(walking up)* Set four rabbit boxes.

Fish: Cut wood all day with Pap.

Beau: I broke ground with grandPap, and scattered fertilizer.

Fish: What kind?

Beau: Some we made from wood ash and oyster shells we dug from the high bank over on Baker Man's Creek.

CL: Boy, did ya find any shark's teeth?

Beau: Shore did, lots. I dug five peck buckets full.

CL: I hear many are found there big as my hand!

Fish: Wow! Yeah, we do find teeth that big down there, and even bigger.

Beau: Yeah, I remember that time we found more than thirty teeth big like that. We laid out two rows of fifteen, and shaped it like a mouth would be. Fifteen would be about how many one jaw would have. Pop, that mouth was more 'n six feet wide!

Fish: I remember that.

CL: Wow! That was a big, dumb shark!

Fish: Yeah it was. We traced out until in the dirt we had an outline of a body what-seemed to line up with the mouth. We paced out this trace line and figured that-shark must have been maybe thirty feet long.

CL: Wow! That's a monster set of joules, dook-chute!

Fish: We better go on inside. Everybody else is.

Beau: Well, two more cars are pulling up.

CL: Who is it?

Beau: Looks like Denine, Lonnie, and Alex.

Alex, Lonnie, and Denine run out of the cars when their doors open. They head toward the steps.

Fish: Fancy seeing you three here.

Alex: 'Tis been awhile. It's not bad here, I guess. (laughs) At least we get to go places ever-now and again in that big green-bean machine there. (*Points toward the church bus*) Maybe we can all ride out in it 'N watch the big Booty Bug mud sling one day, ova yonda by Cooter Creek. What ya think? (*laughs*)

Denine Demoneillie: (*Laughs*) They have that ever-spring, I think. I want to go inside, you know, but somehow I don't want to go at the same time..

CL: It's like that sometimes.

Denine: There's our parents-a-walking up them steps.

Alex: And here we are.

Beau: (*Places his right index finger across his lips*); Shhh, don't say another word.

Denine: (*chuckles*); Oh, lord, here we go.

Beau: (*Glances back up the steps*); *The doors are closing*; Follow me!

Beau ducks down beneath the windows in the church. The glass has a haze on it from the candles in the holders being lit every Sunday and sometimes on other days, for so many years. Each child does the same. The children move toward the rear of the church. At the back side, they all pause in safety.

Denine: (*Laughing*); We're all a-gwine to all get whooped if they find out.

Beau: Well, they ain't, I tell you.

Fish: What on earth are we gonna do back here? Miss Elizabeth 'll know we didn't go to the Sunday School down stairs. She'll dime us all out for shore.

Alex: Lets go look for ghosts down in the basement!

Lonnie: Yeah, they're down there, boys. I hear'd Mr. Carlton Willis's stories. He says there's ghosts from way back down in there.

CL: Oh yeah, like what ghosts?

Lonnie: Like the old war soldier that fought in the Battle of Bethel Township during the Revolution.

CL: Oh, James Cashwell, I remember.

Lonnie: Yeah, him.

Beau: That door underneath the church is always open. Me and some friends hid out in there for a week one summer.

Alex: What friends?

Beau: From over on Turkey Ridge, where I live.

Alex: Who?

Beau: Well, Banjo, Riff Raff, and Huckle-Buck. Shank Shaft, Ponky, and Hump Joe I think, might have been with us.

Denine: I know Banjo and Huckle-Buck. They're crazy. I can tell you that much.

Beau: Anything but civilized. I prefer uncivilized company myself. They are far more fun!

The children walk down a set of concrete steps. They stop at a ragged white thick heavy wooden door. Beau is first, stopping, turning the knob, pushing the door open, walking inside. The others follow. The inside is dark. There is a speck of light in scattered places.

Denine: Does anybody see anything?

Alex: Not a thing.

Lonnie: Not hardly. It seems strangely quiet, don't you think?

CL: Nothing to talk about.

Beau: Can't say I do either. The quietness makes me wonder.

The group moves father back inside, far from the door.

Beau: Hush now... I think I hear some-um.

Fish: What boy? I don't hear a-thang.

CL: Neither do I. What you hear must be one O' your loose screws rattlin'.

Beau: Wait a minute... I think I see somethin'!

Alex: All of you are crazy. I don't see anything in this place!

Fish: Wait a minute. It's somethin' on the ground!

Beau: Yeah, and it's moving!

Lonnie: Let's get out of here! I'm moving on, Papa! (*scrambles back toward the door*)

Fish: It's like a big cloth bag of some sort.

Beau: Yeah, that's what I'm talking about!

Fish: That bag is standing up! Look out now. Let's get away from here! (*scrambles back toward the door.*)

The kids are heading back out toward the door.

Beau: (*remains*) And grandPap carried us down here to show us there ain't no ghosts in here once.

Fish: (*pauses, glancing back*) Are you crazy? Let's go, boy! Come on.

Beau: No wait...! It's a girl in an old night bag, not a ghost. (*He turns around*) Hey! How are you a-doin' gal?

Enter girl

Girl: I'm fine now. I don't know who you are or what you want.

Beau: (*gasps*) Wait a minute... I know you.

Girl: Well you should, boy. (*climbing out of the bag*) I saw you at homecoming a little while ago.

Beau: Yeah, your Jeanie, Miss. McDowell's niece!

Jeanie: That's me, boy. The one and only, in the flesh, and right square in your face!

Beau: (*turns back around*) Wait a minute! Come back in here. It's all OK.

Beau: (*glances in Jeanie's direction*) They all ran, They thought you was a ghost.

Jeanie: Well imagine that. Little ole me, a bloody ghost!

Beau: I always did think you were a handsome ghost, to be honest with you.

Jeanie: Yeah, I've heard all about you. Bad boys like you would say things like that to nice little girls like Me. (*smiles*)

Beau: They're all a-feared, (*smiles*) but I sure ain't.

Jeanie: (*smiles broadly*)

Beau: What in the Sam Hill are you-a-doin' down here in a place like this?

Jeanie: I up and got tired of being civilized, Beau, so I ran away. Civilized life just ain't My slice of cake, honey.. I'm an adventurer, like Jane is to Tarzan. You ever watch that on TV boy?

Beau: Some... I love the black and white shows. You? A little Girl? Got tired of bein' civilized?

Jeanie: Why yeah, two stones and a thick stick! Auntie's farm ain't but three miles or so through the woods. I walked past her horse stables until I came to the field behind it. I walked round the field to the woods. I followed the fire cut until it came out at Midway Grill down yonder. I crossed the highway, then follered the dirt road a- goin' toward the hill where ole Owen's mansion house sits. That runs into the crazy Baker man's Creek. I followed that 'till it took me out by the school house. I can follow the old railroad bed till it carries me into Bethel Township hiah. So, hiah I Am honey, all trimmed, rare, and in the real flesh!

Beau: Wow! Your a real star for bein' uncivilized! What did you eat and drink?

Jeanie: Nab-corn and catfish I catch on lines over in the pond by the hangin' tree across the field yonder, in the woods behind the boy-scout hut.. If'n I stuff a reed full of grass, ditch water makes some fine drinkin'. When that log hut has its door open honey, I make good use of it. I can sleep on that big deer hide they have a hangin' up on the wall. There's a bear hide a-hangin up I use for a blanket.

Beau: Well, how do ya cook it?

Jeanie: On the oil heater down here, in a pot I found in the old cabin in the woods from the graveyard thar. I eat nab-corn raw. I also live in that run down house in the woods beside the graveyard over yonda. Them doors is always open!

Beau: Yeah? That old cabin with the trees growing up through it over there?

Jeanie: I live over there sometimes, when I'm in my fullest blood, and a-rootin' and a-tootin', son!

Beau: How long you been gone?

Jeanie: 'Bot a month, 'bot a week longer maybe.

Beau: Your Mumsie 'll be worried sick.

Jeanie: (*shrugs*) She'll get over it.

Beau: What 'll she do when she finds out about this?

Jeanie: She'll skin my ice, of course! She threatens me with candy striped legs all the time.

Beau reaches into his suit pocket. He pulls out a twist of leaves

Jeanie: What 's that? Looks a mite interestin'

Beau: GrandPap's chaw.

Jeanie: Looks homemade.

Beau: It's twista-chaw.

Jeanie: Yeah boy, that's the best kind!

Beau: You chaw, gal?

Jeanie: Darn tootin'! I kin toot-a-flute 'til a fine ole golden owl hoots, after a good chaw 'n spit a bit, honey! Don't ya eva fergit what I'm a-tellin' ya now. I dumb shore won't tell any O' the others what I just tole you honey.

Beau: I swear you're my kind-a gal, for shore..

Jeanie: *(smiling, shaking her head)* I'll run with ya, honey, but I ain't tyin' myself down to no man! Not-a-sayin' you ain't a good one, but it's just the way the creek flows around me these days.

Beau: *(chuckles)* Well, let's go outside where the light is, with the others.

Jeanie: Sure, why not?

Jeanie and Beau walk out the door, up the stairs, and into the light. Alex, CL, Lonnie, Denine and Fish gasp. They gaze around at one another with their mouths gaping open. Deneane stands at a distance behind them, laughing. Jeanie is wearing faded worn and very dirty bibbed blue jean overalls, and a cast-away tee green shirt with Lynard Skynard written in large letters across the front. She smiles. She skillfully chews the tobacco. She spits with a perfected aim between CL's shiny Sunday leather shoes. He jumps backwards. She explodes into laughter.

Jeanie, Beau, Fish, CL, Deneane, Alex, Lonnie, exit

Scene 5

The kids are gathered out behind the church, in front of the basement door. Jeanie knocks the dust from her tattered, faded denim overalls. Her coal black hair seems to fall into place by itself neatly upon the tops of her shoulders. Her clear pale face and dark eyes appear to capture the sunlight.

Enter Alex

Alex: You almost look like a new person. Where did you git that shirt?

Jeanie: I almost feel like a new person. I live on nabs N handouts, poo-boy. How many times must I say so?

CL: What's the difference? I guess all O' these clothes-lines are filled with clothes for the pickin', eh?

Jeanie: Well I found some nab-corn. See my cobs in the edge of the field yonder?

Beau: The church gives food. You knock on the door, girl.

Jeanie: (*places both hands on her hips*); Then they tell auntie... Come on boy! Your brains be where? Or should I tremble in my dare to ask?

Beau: Give me another spin.

Jeanie: That woman over at Melvin Brothers .. What's her name? Doris, I think? She'll part with cheese sandwiches and Knee-High chocolate drink, if'n ya ask her Kindly, 'N plead yer case right. I worked a few days in thar fer her in exchange for food N a night-bed upstairs. The old foldin' cots N the wool Civil War blankets ain't half bad fer a bed.

CL: Yeah, I get all kinds of stuff in that old store. Good shop made pocket knives, fish hooks, and even some molasses soaked twista-chew one time.

Jeanie: You know how the store leans to one side. There's a great big beehive there I thought about raiding. Haints are upstairs where I was too. I saw one on a dark N stormy night once.

Fish: (*smiles*) Mrs. Doris would love you to get shed of that hive for her. .

Beau: She might add a slice of fresh cured ham onto the cheese for doin' that.

Denine: What are we gonna do? Church 'll be over-with soon.

Jeanie: Lets walk over into the graveyard, and up toward the hickory tree. We'll be out

enough nobody in there can see us.

Denine: What's your whole name?

Jeanie: My whole name? *(smiles,pauses)* Why Sunshine, of course.

Denine: You dog! *(chuckles)* But that's a pretty name. Jeanie Sunshine.

Jeanie: *(firm face, no smiles)* Yeah, you know Miss McDowell from here and at the school library, don't you?

Denine: Yeah.

Jeanie: My Mumsie is her sister.

Denine: That's cool.

The kids walk toward the backside of the graveyard. They walk past the horse and buggy tied up on the old oak tree. They make it halfway out across the backside of the graveyard, turn right, walking among the standing tomb slabs.

Lonnie: Wow! These are some old stones here.

Alex: This one has CSA at the top. Says 1875. Lets see now... that's almost a hundred Years.

Denine: Here's one, look at this. It says Papa was a man who really loved women. But Mama caught him with one a-swimmin' . Here lies Papa. *(Laughs)*.

Jeanie: How old is it?

Denine: 1820.

CL: Here is one that says here lies one so damp and cold, but he always did what he was told, so now the good Lord has his sweet soul.

The kids pass through the graveyard. They pause underneath the huge hickory tree by the highway. Fresh nuts are covering the ground and hanging from the limbs. Denine stoops down, grabbing two or three.

Denine: *(tosses a nut, strikes Lonnie in the chest)* Here goon, let's play war!

Lonnie: *(tosses one a Denine)* Yeah, sounds like fun!

Denean ducks, moves around the group.

Alex: Look out now! *(Tosses a nut, striking Lonnie in the head).*

Beau: *(reaches down, picking a nut up, tossing it and striking CL in the ribs);* Look out boy! *(Glances around)* I'm getting him before he gets me!

The entire group mills around. They race all over underneath the hickory tree and around in the church yard, throwing the wood like hickory nuts. Some of the nuts strike the door of the church. They all laugh. They talk loudly.

Jeanie Sunshine: I'm hitting all of you! I'm not taking chances with nobody!

The church door opens. Out walks the elder patrons. They pause in the churchyard by the steps, glancing around with puzzled expressions on their face.

Elderly lady: *(gazes out toward the hickory tree)* What on earth is this? *(Turns toward the open church door)* Hey Vivian, isn't that Jeanie over there by the hickory tree?

Miss. McDowell: My word! *(gasps);* There she is! Let me run and get that girl, acting and looking so crazy out there.

Miss. McDowell runs out toward the hickory nut tree. The kids are tossing hickory nuts at one another and running all around.

Miss. McDowell: Jeanie girl, you come to me right now! My word, we were so worried. Where on earth have you been? None of us knew what on earth had happened. You know we called the police, don't you?

Jeanie Sunshine: I'm uncivilized, auntie, and I like it!

Miss McDowell: I'll say you are, but you're coming home with me right now.

Jeanie walks over toward Miss. McDowell.

Jeanie Sunshine: Must I? I've had loads of fun auntie. You won't believe the adventures I've had.

Miss McDowell: You'll come with me, gal, or that hickory switch you're going to get will add a count of three.

The two walk away toward Miss. McDowell's car. The kids settle down and stop tossing hickory nuts.

Jeanie Sunshine & Miss McDowell exit

Beau bends down, grabbing a handful, dropping them into his coat pocket.

Beau: We may have called a truce, but I'm getting ready just in case.

Fish: Our parents will be in for a while yet.

Beau: Yeah, they're always last out.

Fish: Come with me. I wanna show you something Beau, while we have time.

The two boys rush back into the church through the back door, avoiding the people standing around and at the front. They walk down the back hallway, until they reach the string on the ceiling to the attic door on the inside roof.

Fish: Squat down and let me stand on your shoulders, Beau.

Beau: OK; *(Beau squats down)*

Fish: *(Gets up onto Beau's shoulders)*; Now stand up slowly and steadily.

Beau: OK, but hang on!

Beau stands slowly. Fish places his hands on the wall. Fish reaches out, grabbing the string, and pulls the door down. A folding ladder sits on the door. He pulls the ladder down so that it reaches the floor.

Fish: Follow me boy.

Beau: Where the Sam Hill are we going?

Fish: You'll see. I found this last Sunday.

Beau: If we get caught in here, we'll both be sore hurt for a month of Sundays.

Fish: *(Places his right index finger across his lips)*; Shhhh! *(whispers)*; Follow me.

The two boys straddle the rafters in the roof, making their way to the right, until they get to a hole with a chandelier flange bolted over it. There is a two inch gap between the hole and the flange.

Fish: *(Places his right index finger over his lips)*: Shhh! *(Fish points down, gazing through the gap)*.

On the inside is a room on the other side of the main sanctuary wall. There is a desk up against the wall beside the door leading into the sanctuary. Four offering plates sit on the desk filled high with green cash. Soon the door to the sanctuary opens. The preacher enters donning an ankle length black robe. He takes each plate, pouring the cash into a large inside pocket on the robe. The last offering plate fills the pocket on the right hand side.

Beau: *(whispering)* My word, Hoss! The hand of God shall strike hard. Fear the lightning.

Fish: Did you see that?

Beau: Yeah, sure did! Can't believe it, 'n neither is nobody else.

Fish: Let's go. Let's get out of here like we came in. I've been a-watching this for three Sundays now. That's why I like being uncivilized. Uncivilized people don't do such bad things like that. When we go outside you'll see the preacher walkin' over to the parsonage, smokin' a fat cigar when his back turns. I hear he drinks whiskey too. Imagine that, if ya will, ole hoss!

Fish & Beau exit as they entered

Act 3

Scene 1

Monday morning

Students are gathering in front of the porch on the school house. The door opens. Beau is walking up from the small bus. Mrs. McNeill steps out onto the porch. She steps to the left.

Enter Mrs. McNeil

Mrs. McNeill: *(Shaking the hand bell); Ring-a ling! Ring-a ling! Ring-a ling!*

The students line up single file before the door. Beau walks in at the rear of the line. He lays his right hand on his side. He realizes he has on the same dress coat he had on the day before. The students step across the threshold. Each one walks toward their desks.

Mrs. McNeill: Good morning students. It appears it's going to be a pretty day!

Tammy Two Step: *(smiles bashfully)* Good morning Mrs. McNeill.

CL: *(nods)* Good morning Mrs. McNeill.

Curtis Curleyhead: *(smiles)* Good Morning Mrs. McNeill.

Leon the Flea-back: Good morning Mrs. McNeil.

Darwell the Flea-back: Good morning Mrs. McNeil.

Sandy Slinky: *(smiles intelligently)* Good morning Mrs. McNeil.

Beau: *(smirks)* Good morning Mrs. McNeill.

Beau walks toward the desks, sitting to the left of Sandy.

Beau:*(turns toward Sandy)* I hated to get out of bed this morning, felt so good in bed.

Sandy Slinky: Smiles.

Beau: I'd rather be fishin' to tell the truth.

Sandy Slinky: *(Smiles);* I can believe that. I'll be the highly paid nurse manager, my

friends Twyla and Kim tell me, where you and your kind 'll be the low wage janitors and security guards.

Beau: That breakfast grandma fixed was so good.

Sandy Slinky: (Smiles); Enjoy fine food while you can.

Beau: I had bacon, a fried egg, a dash of corn beef, grits and toast. Boy, it sure was good!

Sandy Slinky: (laughs and smiles); Tomorrow it will be nab-corn, wood tripe, Indian Potatoes, deer cabbage 'N elf-mustard, boy.

Beau: What about you?

Sandy Slinky: Sticks her tongue out at him and makes a face.

Beau: What does that mean?

Sandy: Slinky: Nothing, just—; (*makes a face and sticks her tongue out again*)

Beau: I don't know how to take that.

Sandy Slinky: Take it however you want. You kin bend over 'N take it like that, if you'd like.

Beau: How am I supposed to take that answer?

Sandy Slinky: Same way, boy. I really don't care.

Beau: That hurts my feelings.

Sandy Slinky: Why should I care?

Beau: Cause I care.

Sandy Slinky: Well that's your problem, boy now.

Beau: But you seem like the type who might care.

Sandy Slinky: But I don't. What more do we have to talk about?

Beau: All I wanted to do was talk.

Sandy Slinky: (*Smiles intelligently*); but we shouldn't talk. Look, class is soon to start.

Beau: What did you have for breakfast?

Sandy Slinky: (*Smiles*); I can clearly see what I am dealing with in a person like you,
Boy

Enter Mrs. Allen

Mrs. Allen: hands out sheets with addition and subtraction problems on them.

Mrs. Allen: Class, today we have to begin with dedicating more time into learning math.
It's all my fault, I take full blame for everything. I had rather read and do
songs than do math. You need to learn it, however. How many fingers am I
holding up?

The entire class: Five.

Mrs. Allen: When I take away two, how many are left?

The entire class: Three.

Mrs. Allen: Now, when I double that, how many am I holding up?

Gene Coffee: Six.

Mrs. Allen: Great job, Gene. When I take away four, how many remain?

Jill: two.

Mrs. McNeil: Great! Well, I want you to get to work on these problems. You have
enough time remaining before morning recess to do these problems. Any
person who doesn't make a hundred must remain inside and at morning
Break, redo them. He will not be allowed to play outside until he makes
one hundred. Any person who doesn't finish will not be allowed to go
outside and play. So all of you need to get to it.

All of the students work. Gene hands his paper in first. He grades out at one hundred. Jill hands her's in next, and grades out. Peanuts hands her's in and grades out. Sandy hands her's in and grades out. Everybody else finishes their papers and grades out, except the Flea-back, the YaHoos, and Beau. These students are forced to remain inside.

Mrs. McNeill: *(shakes the hanbell)* Jing a-ling! Jing a-ling! Jing a-ling!

Mrs. Allen: Alright, Mrs. McNeill rang the bell. It's time to line up, besides all of those who must remain inside.

Beau: Must I remain inside, Mrs. McNeill?

Mrs. McNeill: Yes, those are our rules. You are no kind of exception.

Beau is sitting in the second row from the door. The students walk past him. Sandy makes a face at him. She walks toward the door. She sticks her tongue out at him as she walks past. A few minutes later Beau finishes his work. He turns it in. Mrs. Allen grades it. He makes a hundred. Beau walks out the door and across the porch. Fish waits at the steps for him.

Beau: I was about to die in-there.

Fish: I felt for you. I can only imagine how stuffy it must have felt.

Beau: I barely made it. Breathing fresh air is so good.

Fish: Why does that girl keep sticking her tongue out at you like she does?

Beau: I don't know. She's smart, but kind O'stupid at the same time.

Fish: She kind of has an attitude, if ya ask me, honestly.

Beau: Sort of. I agree.

Fish: I just don't know what I'd do with a gal like her.

Beau: I don't know either, maybe nothin'.

Fish: She can't be allowed to get away with it, if you ask me.

Beau: Maybe when the right mood strikes me, I don't know.

Fish: Yeah, her time has come.

Beau: What I really want is for Peanuts to talk with me again.

Fish: How come you like her so much?

Beau: She is really smart, and is so much fun to be around.

Fish: She is real-skinny to me, and walks around like she is scared of everybody.

Beau: Oh, she's more fun than a bass on a hook. You just gotta know her.

Fish: Why does she stay away from you?

Beau: Cause I keep on getting in so much trouble.

Fish: I'll say yes to that. Maybe she's smarter than I took her for.

Beau: Well, I don't mean to. Crazy things just kind O' happen.

Fish: My daddy keeps on telling me the road to hell is paved with good intentions.

Beau: I don't mean to, I really don't! You gotta believe me, Fish. Somebody always messes with me or something happens, and I wind up deep in the mud.

Fish: Well, you gotta do something Beau.

Beau glances up from his speaking with Fish. He sees Sandy Slinky in a group of girls by the bleachers. She has her back turned to him. He shoves his hands inside his jacket pockets, feeling the hickory nuts he dropped in the day before. Slowly he walks in her direction. He moves until he is somewhat near her. She turns her head as she speaks to a girl beside her, so that the side of it is facing him. He tosses the hickory nut. The nut flies through the air, striking Sandy directly in the side of her head. It makes a loud knock when it hits her. Beau turns around, running back over toward Fish, CL, and Gene.

Fish: I can tell by the way you are running, you are up to something.

Beau: I can't believe my magic shot! Did you see that, yonder boy?

Fish: What do you mean?

Beau: I tossed a hickory nut from forty feet away and struck Sandy in the side of the head with it.

Fish: *(sneers)* See what I mean, boy?

Beau: Oh no, Hoss, it's all good. She never saw me! I made it out O' the combat zone without a single hitch.

Fish: You think that, do you?

Beau: Oh, it's true, I'm telling you.

Fish: It's true, it's true, until you break into.

Beau: Hitting her in the head with a hickory nut isn't that bad. All she ever wants to do when I try to talk to her, is stick her tongue out at me.

Fish: I'm glad it's you and not me.

Mrs. McNeill: *(shakes the handbell)* Ring! Ring! Jing-a-ling!

Fish: Come on boy! It's time for class to begin.

Fish and Beau race toward the porch. Beau spots Peanuts as he is walking up the steps.

Beau: Hey, Peanuts!

Peanuts: Don't you dare talk to me, boy! Go away now.

Beau: Come here. I just want to say hey.

Peanuts: I have to stay away from your kind.

Beau: Can't you just say hey?

Peanuts: You make the YaHoo and them Flea-bacs look good, boy.

Beau: What kind of thing is that to say?

Peanuts: It's the truth.

Beau: Tell the truth, snag a tooth.

Peanuts: Mumzie says your bad.

Beau: I'm not bad! I'm real-good.

Peanuts: Well, why don't you do some real good for a change then.

Beau: I do, everyday.

Peanuts: Then maybe I'll tie the yellow ribbon 'round that ole live oak tree.

Beau: Pauses, smiling as Peanuts walks through the door of the school house ahead of him.

The students walk inside the school house single file, one behind the other. They walk over, taking their seats at their desks. The last student takes his seat. The classroom begins to settle down. Mrs. McNeill walks. She pauses in front of the chalkboard.

Enter Mrs. McNeil

Mrs. McNeill: Class, before we commence this morning, something has been brought to my attention. Does anybody have any idea what this might be?

The entire class: Silence, students glance around at one another.

Mrs. McNeill: Nobody in here has any idea what I am talking about, eh?

The entire class: Gasp, students stare at one another drop jawed.

Mrs. McNeill: (*Pauses at Beau's desk*) Son, tell 'em what I'm referring to here?

Beau: (*Gasps*); I don't know Mrs. McNeill.

Mrs. McNeill: Don't you feel like you need to stand up before the class here and apologize to somebody for something?

Beau: No, or ah..., I can't remember.

Mrs. McNeill: You mean you can't remember doing anything to anybody recently?

Beau: No Mrs. McNeill, I can't remember.

Mrs. McNeill: Well, I think it's high time we freshen your memory a bit first thing this mornin'. Stand up, boy!

Beau: Stands up.

Mrs. McNeill: You don't recall doing anything to this gal? (*Mrs. McNeill points over toward Sandy Slinky*)

Beau: Oh, oh, hmm, I think I do, now.

Mrs. McNeill: Well, boy you walk to the front of this class here beside me.

Beau walks to the front of the class, standing beside Mrs. McNeill.

Mrs. McNeill: Now you tell this class what you did, son!

Beau: Oooh, hmm, I threw a hickory nut over to a mouse, and he tossed it and hit Sandy square in the head!

Mrs. McNeill: (*sagging, hard face*) Now, you come along with me boy, and stand in front of my desk here. I got something for you!

Beau steps to the side, standing in front of Mrs. McNeill's desk

Mrs. McNeill opens a left hand drawer on her desk, taking out a rolled up razor strap. She unrolls it.

Mrs. McNeill: Now son, I want you to bend o'er that desk here, and hold on for dear life, cause I'm fixing to knock you slam through that wall yonder, so help me

good Lord in heaven above!

Beau bends over the desk. He squints his eyes as he does. Mrs. McNeill swings the leather strap with unyielding energy.

Thwack! Thwack! Thwack! Thwack! Thwack! Thwack! Thwack! Thwack! Thwack!

The entire class: *(Gasp)*; Aww! Ohhh! She got him good.

Exit Beau & Mrs. McNeil

Scene 2

Lunch recess

Beau is out by the bleachers with CL

Enter Beau & CL

CL: Boy, you got a good one, did you?

Beau: Yeah, but it wasn't deserved.

CL: Look what you did, boy. You're always doing something. You're like that boy, William Little, you told us all about from yer old school.

Beau: All I did was hit that girl in the head with a hickory nut.

CL: But it hurt her, boy.

Beau: Naw, it didn't! She's just a cry baby. What you staring at so?

CL: She's a girl, son, and girl's can't take it like we can.

Beau: So's Jeanie. Jeanie didn't cry, remember? She was hit by hickory nuts a-plenty Pop.

CL: Yeah boy, but no girl anywhere is like that wild flower, Jeanie.

CL: *(jerks his head back)* Look across that ball field down next to the woods yonder.

Beau: At the YaHoo and them Flea-backs?

CL: Yeah, I see them ganging up a lot lately.

Beau: You git feelings?

CL: Yeah, somethin' 's a-cookin'.

Beau: Seeing that does give feelin's.

Peanuts walks up in a group of girls.

Beau: Hey, Peanuts!

Peanuts: Don't you dare! Stay away. *(She turns her back)*.

Beau: Can't you say hey?

Betty Rae: *(Turns around)*; Can't you see? She don't want to talk to you, crazy boy?

Beau: I only want to say hey.

Betty Rae: Sluff it, boy! Go slip slide away somewhere in a Slim Jim.

Jill: Yeah, sluff it up the fluff, boy! Go take the Slim Jim your in, into a pig pen.

Deneane: *(laughing)*; Yeah, sluff it until ya huff 'N puff, boy! Peanuts don't want to play.

All exit

Across the baseball field, next to the woods

Enter Klaven Clodhopper

Klavan Clodhopper: (huffs) He's got it coming to him. Look at him over yonder.

Leon the Flea-back: O.K. doc, what 's our plan?

Chris the hippie: We're cooking on it. Boys. Us foxes is-a stirrin' about this hen house here!

Airic Linberger: Hey Chris dog! (*in a gruff voice*) What about the old witch doctor's house back in them woods thar, yonder ways on the hill by the creek?

Chris the hippie: What about it?

Airic Lindberger: Is it any good for anything?

Klavin Clodhopper: I've spent many a night laid up in there. The likes of you could live there N be happy.

Leon the Flea-back: Will it keep the rain off?

Klavin the Clodhopper: Yeah, well and good. A little mouse runs hither and thither, but other than that, all is well.

Airic Lindbverger: Good.. (*smirks, tilts his head sideways*). Where is Cynthia at?

Leon the Flea-back: Cynthia who?

Airic Lindberger: Oh come on, hoe digger.. I don't know! One of your people.

Leon the Flea-back: Oh, oh, awe... she's around, she's around. Can be a mite tough to be found.

Aric Lindberger: She didn't go to class today, right?

Leon the Flea-back: Naw, naw, right, right. She slipped away in the dark of night.

Aric Lindverger: (*tilts his head sideways*) Is she around somewhere in the woods hereabouts?

Leon the Flea-back: Yeah, I think so. She had a buck-accord over by the clover on the Creek, I think.

Airic Lindberger: (*chuckles*); I should 'uv known it.

Chris the hippie: I think I finally figured you out. The old Witch Doctor's house is a dumb good start fer a first night out. Know what I mean?

Both laugh

Airic Lindberger: (*laughing*); We'll be sure to toss some hotdog pieces out for their friendly dogs dropping by to see if anybody is home, eh? Dogs eating our hotdogs have a way of straying. Living by our wits has taught us that much, which is more than this school has ever taught any of us.

Leon the Flea-back: He's an old, big money buck ripe for the squeezin', but what's in the mix, Pop rock?

Airic Lindberger: She has a chore. I'm scared to ask how old.

Leon the Flea-back: Like what? (*shrugs*) This buck is maybe twenty, I think. He slaves in the goober plant hereabouts. But somethin' beats nuttin'.

Airic Lindberger: She's half friends with that mush-chick of Beau, right?

Leon the Flea-back: Yeah. What's a stir?

Airic Lindberger: I want her to bring her out here, to that wild straw-berry patch in the corner ova yond-a ways..

Leon the Flea-back: When?

Airic Lindberger: Today. Can it be arranged?

Leon the Flea-back: What makes you think she'll go to strawberries?

Airic Lindberger: She does, all the time with Beau and Sandy.

Leon the Flea-back: What's cookin'?

Airic Lindberger: (*smirks*) We all 're in need of a little accord, I think. I think I know how to get it.

Klavin Clodhopper: (*gasps*) I get it! Oh, I get it, dog. Sounds great to me. That'll fix the punk fer good!.

Leon the Flea-back: (*Glares over at Airic who laughs*); You're heading for a crash.

Airic Lindberger: Oh, roast me slow, 'N Let the fiddler on the roof play his sob-tune.

Leon the Flea-back: So it will. Maybe this day.

Klavin Clodhopper: I don't have any Razzle-Dazzle yet, but I have plenty of cured Cassina.

Leon the Flea-back: That's weak.

Klavin Clodhopper: Enough does it though.

Leon the Flea-back: Half pound should buy the job. Aw, I say perfect.. (thumbs up)

Klavin Clodhopper: We want our prey on the strawberry patch by last break today.

Leon the Flea-back: You've said the word. Where's the fruit?

Airic Lindberger: By the pine tree ova yond-a ways.

Leon the Flea-back walks over toward a large pine. He finds a plastic bag filled half full with dried brown hashed up leaves. He picks the bag up high before his face. He sniffs inside. He smiles broadly.

Leon the Flea-back, Klavin Clodhopper, Airic Lindberger, and Chris the hippie exit

Back in class

Lunch time

Enter Miss McNeil

Mrs. McNeill: Class the math worksheets have all been turned in. Everybody scored one hundred. I think it's excellent. Lets line up across the front of the room here, then we'll go on to lunch. After we eat, you may all go outside as you finish. Today is warm and the weather is good. All of us need more fresh air, I think.

Students line a single file across the front of the classroom. One at a time they make their way into the small room in the rear of the school. Several walk outside through the rear door. Many eat while sitting on the steps. Beau grabs his lunch box from the bookshelf where they are stored. He glances across the room. He spots Peanuts on the floor underneath the window eating. He walks over toward her.

Enter Breau & Peanuts

Beau: Hello, no see in a long time.

Peanuts: (*Angry face*); Don't dare talk to me! I've had enough with you.

Beau: But– I didn't mean to...

Peanuts: I hear what you say. Please go away, Beau.

Beau: I don't want to leave you.

Peanuts closes her lunchbox. She arises from the floor. She walks out the back door. She takes a seat outside on the steps. She opens her lunch box. She begins eating her peanut butter & jelly sandwich. Cynthia the Flea-back slowly walks up toward her.

Beau exits , Enter Cynthia the flea-back

Cynthia the Flea-back: (*smiling warmly*) Hey girl? How now? Do little 'n take long trips.

Peanuts: Man problems, friend. Can't live with 'em or without 'em.

Cynthia the Flea-back: (*chuckles*) No such problems being a Flea-back.

Peanuts: I don't know what to do, Cynthia.

Cynthia the Flea-back: We could walk 'N talk about it. Let's go!

Peanuts: Yeah, that would be cool. I need a long walk.

Cynthia the Flea-back: Finish eating. Plenty of time yet, girl.

Peanuts: I'm through. Didn't have much. Let's go, girl.

Peanuts: *(closes her box, lays it on the steps, leaps up)* Lets walk. I need it bad.

Cynthia the Flea-back; *(Walking slowly across the baseball field)*
: How now with your man-problems? *(Bursts out laughing)*

Peanuts: Beau is my first pick, but he gets into way too much trouble for me. I love him, but...

Cynthia the Flea-back: *(laughs)* He's crazy, for sure!

Peanuts: I tell him to straighten up, but he keeps on...

Cynthia the Flea-back: How long have you known him?

Peanuts: This year makes two.

Cynthia the Flea-back: Let him go. There are other things in the world more important.

Peanuts: *(sighs)* I like going on long walks.

Cynthia the Flea-back: Me too. See the rabbit in the grass yonder? See the squirrels?

Peanuts: The song birds sound so nice. The wisteria this year hangs in the air. I feel that ghosts are all around us, Cynthia.

Cynthia the Flea-back: Wow, me too. Matter of fact, I know they are.

Peanuts: Have you ever seen one?

Cynthia the Flea-back: Sure, I have. *(laughs)* I see 'em on a regular basis round hiah, girl!

Peanuts: What did it look like?

Cynthia the Flea-back: A shadow person once, mist, a feeling somebody was around.

Peanuts: Wow! I want to see one.

Cynthia the Flea-back: Really? Well I'll show you some.

Peanuts: Where at? I've looked hard but ne'er found one.

Cynthia the Flea-back: (*cuts her eyes*) Down by the wild strawberry patch.

Peanuts: Which one?

Cynthia the Flea-back: The one in the corner by the far ditch.

Peanuts: Oh yeah! I know that place, but I've never seen any ghosts.

Cynthia the Flea-back: But you will. Come on with me.

(*Both walking toward the corner*) Peanuts: The wild strawberry patch is in the woods
thirty yards back.

Cynthia the Flea-back: Wow, look at the wild flowers! See the yaupon bush movin'
yonder in the wind?

Peanuts: Yeah, they always grow back here. Some wild Rhododendrons do too.

Cynthia the Flea-back: So Beau walks with you down in here, huh?

Peanuts: Yeah, he picks me bouquets of rhododendrons and wild pink roses.

Cynthia the Flea-back: You didn't make any accords with him, did you?

Peanuts: (*laughs*); No? Why? I have no ideas of such. What do you mean?

Cynthia the Flea-back: Boys often take girls down into the woods to make accords, you
Know. At least Flea-back boys sure do with us.

Peanuts: Never heard of such. Us humans don't do such things.

Cynthia the Flea-back: (*laughs, raises eyebrows*); Yeah? Well look at the strawberry

patch.

Peanuts: It's so big and there 're so many. They're smaller than the ones Mum buys in the store, but so much sweeter, Cynthia.

A stick pops behind the two on either side.

Peanuts: (*whispers*) Did you hear that? What was it?

Cynthia the Flea-back: A ghost, I figure?

Four huge lumbering male figures wearing ragged flannel shirts with bandannas covering their faces, step out of the woods quietly and slowly from either side. They walk up to Peanuts on either side.

Enter four lumbering male figures

A gruff voice: You're coming away with us. No use resisting. Come along quietly, or else.

Peanuts: What? Who are you? Help, Cynthia!

Cynthia the Flea-back: Never trust a blood enemy. Your granpappy ne'er told you that? You'll learn the ways of the real world soon, gal.

Peanuts: Enemy? What do you mean?

Cynthia the Flea-back: Flea-backs and all humans are enemies, and have been since time began.

Peanuts: (*distressed voice*); But Cynthia! Why—?

A hard hand of the gruff voice covers her mouth. Peanuts is taken from behind and from both sides. She is pulled along.

Gruff voice: You 're coming with us and doing as we say, or else. You got that, gal? You think you're so good. You N yer kind 'll learn not to throw any weight around with us real people!

Peanuts: (*in a terrified voice*); Yes, yes! (*Struggles*) *but, but—!*

Peanuts, Cynthia the Flea-back, the bandanna covered faces, exit

Scene 3

Tuesday morning

Students line up before the porch of the academy. Mrs. McNeill opens the door. She steps out on the porch. She rings the hand bell. Students walk inside, single file. They calmly take their seats.

Enter Gene Coffee

Gene Coffee: We are having the May Pole dance soon.

Beau: It 'll be a while before May.

Gene Coffee: You know, Mr. McNeill does that at the Easter festival anyway.

Beau: I wasn't here last year. There was no Maypole anything where I was.

Gene Coffee: You know, they have a big square dance after lunch and a hay ride!

Beau: That 'll be fun. I can't wait myself

Gene Coffee: Who 's gonna be your dance mate?

Beau: I don't know, but I know who I hope will.

Gene Coffee: Who? Sandy?

Beau: I don't see any wrong in her, but I want Peanuts.

Gene Coffee: Well, Mrs Allen just called the roll. Did you hear?

Beau: So? What's so different about that?

Gene Coffee: Did you hear her name?

Beau: I can't say I was paying attention. I don't even hear my own name most of the time.

Gene Coffee: Well I was, and I didn't hear her name called.

Beau: Her Mumzie makes her help tend tobacco beds sometimes at this time of year.

Gene Coffee: Oh, O.k. Do you see her anywhere around?

Beau: No, (*glancing all around himself*) Can't say as I do.

Gene Coffee: Might better check on her. I got a bad feelin' to be honest.

Beau: Naw dog, she's fine. I'm not worried.

Friday morning

Students gather before the porch, talking. Mrs. McNeil rings the hand bell. The students line up at the door in single file. The line begins moving forward. The students all take their seats. Mrs. McNeil stands before the chalk board at the front of the class.

Enter Mrs. McNeil

Mrs. McNeill: Everybody look around you this morning.

Students all gaze around at one another.

Mrs. McNeill: Do you notice anybody missing?

Several students: Yes Mrs. McNeill, Peanuts is not here!

Mrs. McNeill: That's right, she has not been here for three days now. Do any of you know where she is right now?

The whole class: No Mrs. McNeill! We have no idea.

Enter Mrs. Allen

Mrs. Allen: (*Walks up beside Mrs. McNeill*); Now is not the time to keep secrets. Her parents are worried sick. Her mother called the school in hysteria and crying. If any of you know, please tell us.

The whole class: We don't know Mrs. Allen!

Gene Coffee: (*Glances hard at Beau*); I told you to find her, boy! You should get another boot scalding for this!

Mrs. Allen: The police have searched all around these woods hereabouts with helicopters and bloodhounds, and still can't find her. Help us if you can.

Beau: (*gasps*); This is terrible! Somebody must do something. Somebody must...!

Gene Coffee: I've been a-tellin' you, screw head!

Beau: (*gasps!*) I have to think of something!

Gene Coffee: And quick. Bloodhounds can't even find her.

Beau: Bloodhounds can be outfoxed. That is what I am a-feared of right now.

Gene Coffee: Bloodhounds can find anything and anybody. There's no way to outfox one.

Beau: If a big boar coon can, then so can a woods-wise man.

Gene Coffee: Where have you seen a coon outfox one at, boy?

Beau: GrandPap hunts often. I go with him at night. I love huntin' coon and possum.

Gene Coffee: How do ya fetch a coon the dogs miss?

Beau: On gut instinct, and with a light. Usually, almost always, he's still in the area.

Gene Coffee: You think Peanuts is in the area?

Beau: Gut says so, to be honest.

Gene Coffee: But she didn't outfox the hounds, somebody else did, right?

Beau: (*Swallows hard, gazing out*); Yeah, a-feared so. Some woodwise pig did...I think.

Gene Coffee: Like my grandma always says, the sand glass is a-running empty.

Beau: I'll find her. Ever-body is depending on it. I will, you wait and see!

Gene Coffee: How?

Beau: I got my ways, dog.

Gene Coffee: There's a way?

Beau: (*Sobs*); She's such a good gal. She didn't deserve any of this.

Jing a-ling! Jing a-ling! Jing a-ling!

Mrs. Allen: (*Shaking the hand bell*); It's time for morning break. Let's line up now!

Students line up at the door to go out. Mrs. McNeill opens the door. Students go out in single file, walking across the porch, down the steps, scattering into the school yard.

Beau: Walks down the steps, glancing around hysterically.

Crook: Boy, what are you a-lookin' fer so?

Beau: You seen Donna, Cap'n?

Crook: Donna Darlin'?

Beau: Yeah. I need her now more N ever.

Crook: Hambone, I saw her easin' into the edge of the woods behind the school house.
She always sits down there and does something with them old pots she always
has around her. She's a real-weird one, let me tell ya.

Beau: Thanks. (*He begins walking in that direction*) You made my day bo-pop.

Crook: My stars 'n garters boy, you a-hittin' on her now?

In the edge of the wax myrtle and the yaupon bushes behind the school house

Enter Donna Darling

Beau: There you are! I kin see you a-sitting down through these trees, gal.

Donna Darling: *(smiles)* Long time no see, boy. I wondered when you'd come a runnin'.

Beau: I didn't mean to ignore you.

Donna Darling: I know. I miss talking to ya. You still running with Peanuts?

Beau: Well, yes and no. You still doin' magic?

Donna Darling: *(smiling)* I live for that, always.

Beau: I need yer help. You just don't know how much.

Donna Darling: Anytime fan-doe, just let me know.

Beau: Can you see things?

Donna Darling: I kin see into the future, the past, and unseen things in the present.

Beau: Can you find Peanuts for me?

Donna Darling: *(smiles broadly)* Not a problem at all, honey. It's a poo-boy's job to find her.

Beau: Do you know how I can fetch her when you do find her?

Donna Darling: Not a problem. We have it all under control here, with me bein' cap'n of the ship..

Beau: *(Smiles)*; Wow! I'm so happy, Donna!

Donna Darling: I was a-wondering why them police didn't ask me. They should never let dogs do what a good witch is so much better at. Don't you agree?

Beau: Well, why didn't you help, then?

Donna Darling: (*smiles, shrugs*) I would have honey, no problem any time, but you 're the first to ask little ole Me.

Beau: Tell me what to do.

Donna Darling: Walk over to that old pine stump hole yonder with me.

She arises, they walk.

Donna Darling: See how deep that 'on is, and how dark it is on the inside?

Beau: Yeah, it shows the world up here clear as a bell.

Donna Darling: See the water in it, and our reflection?

Beau: Yeah.

Donna Darling: Well, give me time to scry into it. You kin sit here if you want.

Beau: Do ya see anything yet?

Donna Darling: (*turns, sighs*) Boy, it takes time, and don't you dare talk to me when I'm a-scryin'!

Beau: I don't know if I kin wait that long.

Donna Darling: Well, since you asked me, you go on along your way, boy. When break is over 'N you git back into class, there 'll be a note on yer desk, inside that Jump Sally Jump book I saw you a-reading and had laid on it. It'll tell you what you gotta do to git her back. Any questions, then feel free to ask me. Stay here, and see me throw the spell and ask the water spirits to show me the way. (*pauses, smiles, tilts her head*) Kindly fetch that ole bowel for me in the trash pile back toward the school house, if you could, please, when you decide to go on yer way.

Beau: Sure! (*steps out of the yaupon stand. Returns with an old army cook pot with the letters CSA stamped into the side.*)

Donna Darling: Water in the hole, thy power is ne'er cold, Show me the way to make

this boy's day. The boy is a-cryin' while I'm a-scryin', show me the sights so my eyes 'll be a-spyin'. The girl is lost to this boy's great cost, Please find her for us before her body is tossed.

Gazes inside the pot, dips some water from the hole, stirs with a dry twig

Donna Darling: A mite of this an' that,
A tongue of cat,
An ear of bat
Is where it's at.

A banshee's scream,
A nightmare dream,
A scale of rattlesnake-bream
Will be perfect,
It seems.

Find the demon's breath,
Before the flood it left,
That of the leader will be best,
High above the rest.
Bring earth's wickedness back down
Into their nest.

Beau: Thanks, a big thank you! You're not a witch, honey you 're an angel!

Donna Darling: Wait! I've always liked you, Beau, but everything has a price, my dear boy.

Beau: (*Gasps*); Well, what's your price? Ever-body has one now.

Donna Darling: Be mine for the next week, all mine, and be my partner at the Easter Festival square dance, and mine for the day.

Beau: Yeah, ooh, sure, (*swallows and smiles*); sure!

Donna Darling: There's more now, boy. Grab ya wad hard fer this one.

Beau: Sure now, oooh, tell me.

Donna Darling: I want a great big kiss every day, right here! (*Points to her left cheek*); I want a nice one at the Easter dance too.

Beau: Ohh, sure, sure, Donna. (*smiles*) No problem with that my doll.

Donna Darling: I want you to tell everybody at the Easter dance you are all mine, and nobody else's!

Beau: Ooo, OK, Ok! Sure.

Donna Darling: OK, now you kin go on now, big boy!

Donna Darling exits

Back out by the bleachers

Enter CL

CL: Where have you a-been at, boy?

Crook: You've been a-talkin' to that witch, haven't ya?

Beau: Sort of, (*shrugs*) yeah, I suppose.

Crook: Well, what did she say to ya?

Beau: Oh, nothin' much.

In the direction of the school house: Ring a-ling! Ring a-ling! Ring a-ling!

Crook: Yonder 's the class bell, boys! Let's go before we're late.

CL, Crook, and Beau exit

Scene 4

Back in class

Students are getting seated. Beau sees the Jump Sally Jump reading book on his desk.

Enter Beau

Beau: Opens book and finds neatly folded note. Opens note:

Note: *(In a girl's printed handwriting)*; The YaHoo and the Flea-back have her held captive. Her captors are Klavan Clodhopper, Chris the hippie, Leon the Flea-back, and Marvin the Flea-back. She was tricked by Cynthia the Flea-back.

Beau: *(Mumbles)* Dash it all! She thought Cynthia was her friend. How could she do that?

Note: She's tied up in grandma Sadie Bizzell's Plantation house in Rake Shin Bay, and guarded by the YaHoo and the Flea-backs. She's fed and treated fairly well. They want two thousand dollars for her release. The police are searching these woods here and the growed up area 'round the old witch Doctors House on the hill near the creek. They only pretended to have her there, so the dogs would be outfoxed. The dogs have picked up hotdog sections filled with shredded clear glass. They lay down, sicken, and will eventually die.

Beau: *(gasps)* There's no way! Nobody has that kind of money.

Note: To get her back, go to the hollow holly tree with the large limbs covered in mistletoe, down past the woodshed. There's a pretty nine inch by nine inch box inside. DO NOT OPEN IT. It's filled with The Watcher's Chief, Artegoph's breath. You'll be cursed and worse, if you do.

Don't set the box out until after you get this black spot. When The enemy opens it, woe unto him, and the sweet cherub from beyond will lift Peanuts into a heavenly bed of four leaf clovers after the Easter festival dance.

Beau: *(mutters)*; I can't believe this, but I'll do it. I'll do this, by Joe Poker Doe!

Lights Dim

Monday Morning

Enter Mrs. McNeil

Students are walking toward their desks. Mrs. McNeill stands in front of the chalkboard.

Mrs. McNeill: Class, the little Lewis girl has still not been found. Nobody knows anything about where she might be. The police still haven't found anything. Her parents are sick with worry. Should anybody hear or find out anything, then please let some of us know. We also have found signs the school may have been broken into. Nothing was stolen or damaged, but we are not sure why it happened or who may have done it. Bad people are in this neighborhood for sure, so be careful out there, please!

Gene Coffee: *(raises his right hand)*; Some YaHoo somewhere got her. I can tell you!

Mrs. Allen: Nobody knows anything as of yet. Anybody, if you find out or hear something, please let us know.

Beau finds a white sheet of white construction paper on his desk with a black spot in the center.

Black spot: *(has written)* \$2000.00 ASAP, or else.

Beau: Folds the paper and places it into his shirt pocket.

Mrs. McNeill: We are going to work on math problems again today. We will not finish before morning recess, but we will come back in and complete this then.

Time passes, students work

Mrs. McNeill: *(rings the hand bell)*; Ring a-ling! Ring a-ling! Ring a-ling!

Students walk out of the school house single file, across the porch, down the stairs.

Crook: Well what do ya know? Anything shown up yet?

Beau: *(sighs, drops head)* Nothin' yet for sure. Might have some small leads.

Crook: Time 's a-wastin. Passin' time nears the bell of death's knell chime. My granny always says that.

Beau: I have a winning feeling. You know what I'm a talkin' 'bout here?

Crook: What are you gonna do?

Beau: Walk with me for a few. Crook. There 's a few thangs we need to find round here

Crook: Where? What on earth are we headed into now?

Beau: To the backside of the school house.

Crook: (*shrugs, laughs*) Sure, OK.

Lights darken
Beau and Crook walk

Crook: What's up doc?

Beau: Walk with me into these woods.

Crook: What are we a-lookin' for ?

Beau: The old woodshed, and a thing or three beyond.

Crook: The one where you got scalded?

Beau: Yeah, that one, where the noise went rat-a-tat-tat.

Crook: I see it up ahead in the bushes.

Beau: I see it too.

Crook: Well, here we are. How now brown cow?

Beau: Now we're looking for a certain kinda holly tree.

Crook: What kinda holly tree chickaree?

Beau: A big one that's holler, with a bunch of mistletoe on its limbs.

Crook: Ova yonder ways I see a big one, and there 's mistletoe on the limbs, *(points)* look!

Beau: Yeah! I see it too, beside the old Indian grave-mound yonder, boy.

Crook: Is that the one? There 're more O' them thangs round here.

Beau: We'll find out. *(starts walking)*

Crook: Well here we are at it. What's so special?

Beau: Yeah, here on the backside it's certainly holler.

Crook: What else?

Beau: *(gasps, stoops)* And there it is...

Crook: What? That box? It's pretty with the lavender hydrangea flowers and big pink ribbon and all. Other than that, what's so special about it?

Beau: Here, now follow me!

Crook: Where in the Sam Hill are we a-goin' now, Pop rock?

Beau: You'll see! Follow me dook-chute.

Crook: Gimme that box 'N we'll find out what 's in it.

Beau: *(laughs)*; Follow me! Stop yer barkin' pup, before you wind up gittin' squashed.

Across the ball field past the hog's head, into the edge of the woods beyond.

Crook: What 's this about?

Beau: You'll see. Watch what we do.

Crook: Why are you settin' that thang down on this old cedar stump?

Beau: You'll see. The trap is now set, Pop.

Crook: The YaHoo and the Flea-back 'll get it.

Beau: Yeah, I know. That's the plan.

Crook: You know, I've always heard these woods are haunted.

Beau: I have to.

Crook: But there 's loads of wild strawberries in here, daisies, wood tripe, deer cabbage, ramps, 'N honeysuckle this time of year, Hoss. Remember how back at the Christian Academy we used to pull the stem from the backside of the flowers, and suck the nectar off? Ole gramps 'll have a field day here!

Beau: I guess that's what the YaHoo and the Flea-backs live off of.

Crook: Yeah, ole Airic's Mumzie beat him, his brothers, and his sisters out of their shack, I hear-ed.

Beau: Oh yeah? Where is it?

Crook: That wrecked up white shack in the woods, on the other side of the field next to the woods across from the old railroad depot.

Beau: Ain't no power in there, Pa. Ain't no septic tank.

Crook: I know, and the shack was growed up all around.

Beau: Me and this crazy girl I know, named Jeanie, used to sneak over there an' plunder.

Crook: Find anything? What was with it, might I ask?

Beau: Yeah boy, old phonographs, hand turning washing machines, a washboard, an' pieces of rusty tools. Nothin' else.

Crook: Wow! Where is she from? Sounds like I could know her.

Beau: She tole me from the witch house over in the Dardin Woods. Seems like somehow her and Donna Darlin' are kin, or somethin.

Crook: I know where that is. That's the one with all of them skulls in it, with the walls plastered in newspaper articles telling about the graves they came from bein' robbed. Donna was livin' in that house too, I think..

Beau: Believe it's so. There 's a cave back-up in there, with big clay Indian pots full of arrowheads, tommy-hawk heads, spear points, beads, and wampum on leather strings.

Crook: How do you know?

Beau: GrandPap 'N me sneaked in the Darden Woods one night, a deer huntin'.

Crook: Wow! Let's you 'N me go up in-there one night.

Beau: Sure thang! It's been a while for me.

Crook: First hazy half moon we'll go doc..

Beau: Jeanie tole me she sneaked away one time and lived in that ole house before.

Crook: Wow! Who is this Jeanie vixen ?

Beau: Oh, she's the queen O' livin' uncivilized. She's my kind O' woman, to tell the truth.

Crook: So why not? You a-feared or somethin' boy?

Beau: She done tole me she'll run with me all day long, but she ain't tying herself down to no man anywhere.

Crook: Sounds interestin'. She needs a tamin' though.

Beau: Naw now Pa, wild and uncivilized is definitely my favorite kind!

Crook: Well, she sounds like a colt in need of a good break . I want to meet this filly.

laughs

Beau: So why did ole Airic get beat out like that?

Crook: Gotta make his own way. His Mumzie makes her 'n a-courtin' men and in small nabs, they say. Children gotta to make their 'n.

Beau: Ole Airic sure has some nice parents.

Crook: We're both blessed boy. Let's walk, Beau. (*glances around*) I got an uneasy feeling in here all O' sudden.

Crook and Beau exit

Scene 5

Evening break, late

A soupy fog eases across the landscape as the woods begin to darken.

Enter Leon the Flea-back

Leon the Flea-back: It's so fun slinkin' along watching the schoolhouse from in here.

Chris the hippie: I like the life I live, myself. Night and day, I'm a free bird, a-livin' by my wits.

Marvin the Flea-back: Yeah, we do what we want. We live by the sword.

Klavin Clodhopper: I've got the best O' both worlds, myself. I'm in and I'm out.

Airic Lindberger: (*usual gruff voice*); Yeah, but we have things to do while we're here, boys.

Cynthia the Flea-back: I see it's foggy and gettin' late, but do I spy somethin' up ahead?

Chris the hippie: I'll say it's somethin' alright. This fog needs to thin for me to see.

Marvin the Flea-back: We need some light, honey pots!

Airic Lindberger: Looks like a fancy flower covered blue box to me, with a pink ribbon around it... ! What is it?

Chris the hippie: I think payday just came through for us, boys! (*laughs*)

Klavin Clodhopper: I can't believe it! I'm so happy, boys!

Darwell the Flea-back: Are all of ya gonna talk about it? Let's open it!

Cynthia the Flea-back: (*snatches the box up from the stump*); I'm opening, so it's mine!

Klavin Clodhopper: No! We're all gatherin' round for this pinata party, my sweet grapes.

Marvin the Flea-back: Boy, your so big, Cindy', if'n it is food you sho don't need any!

Cynthia the Flea-back: (*snatches the lid from the box*); Look in an' see for yer-selves, you saucy bandi-coots!

The box: (*A great wind roar*). Haunting laughter, mysterious voice.

Mysterious voice: Cercies, Hecate', Media, Paiphae, now roams abroad. May the cherished Priestess of Endor finally fulfill sweet Gehenna's secular call!

Lights suddenly dim. *They all vanish, box falls onto the ground*

Cynthia the Flea-back, Marvin the Flea-back, Leon the Flea-back, Klavin Clodhopper, Airic Lindbverger, Chris the hippie, exit as the curtain drops.

Act 4

Scene 1

Good Friday Easter Festival

morning

Students gather around the school house porch. May pole is up. The upper grades students are milling all around. Excitement is in the air.

Enter Mrs. McNeil

Mrs. McNeill: Students, today is bright and sunny, and going to be a fabulous day, I know! We have lots planned. We have the May Pole. We have toe sack races. We have the dunking seat and the horseshoe toss, not to mention our foot race around the field. Participate and enjoy! Prizes are given out to winners.

Donna Darling: (*gazes over*) My time in your company this week has been most delightful, Beau.

Beau: The best is yet to come, my dear!

Donna Darling: I'll sure stay right by your side.

CL: Ooo now! Lookie here. How now?

Fish: Ooo wee! Look what I see.

Gene Coffee: You are taking the broom for a flight together tonight, eh?

Twayla Clothcutter: Umhmm! What is Peanuts going to say about this?

Tonya Timorous: It's more like, what am I gonna say? What is this? (*Points, smiles*)

Beau: Well everybody, this is my dolly for today! (*Smiles, bows*)

Cheers, claps

Sandy Slinky: What happened to Peanuts?

Gene Coffee: Nobody knows yet.

Fish: Look yonder (*points*). Let's do the apple toss!

Fish and CL walk over to the stand

Beau: *(glances over at Donna)* What do you want to do?

Donna Darlin': I'll toss the horseshoes with you.

Beau: Sounds good. Let's go!

People stand around clapping

Crook: Oh look out now, they got a band about to play.

Gene Coffee: Its fiddles and banjos!

Band plays Turkey in The Straw

Twyla Clothcutter: Let's all dance!

Tonya Two Step: Dose-y-Dose!

Beau: I'm a cloggin' fool. Look at me!

Donna Darlin' : I can wiggle my nose and change the tune.

Crook: Wow! Blow our minds, Donna girl!

Band plays Foggy Mountain Breakdown

Twyla Clothcutter: Wow! What a gal!

Crook: I don't believe it!

Beau: (smiles, laughs) She tole you so!

Tonya Two Step: Seein' is believin' honey! We'll dance the day and the night away.

Donna Darling: Want another?

Gene Coffee: One more time and somethin' is definitely up.

Donna Darling: *(nods her head in the direction of the band)*; This rhythm be right!

Band plays Rocky Top

Lead singer: Wish that I was on ole Rocky Top
Down in them Tennessee Hills,
Ain't no smoggy smoke near this cabin I've got,
Ain't no electric bills.

Once I had a gal on Rocky Top,
Half bear, the other half cat,
Wild as a mink, but sweet as soda pop,
And cagy as a barnyard rat..

Rocky Top, you'll always be
Home sweet home to me,
Good ole Rocky Top,
Rocky Top Tennessee!

Corn won't grow on Rocky Top,
Dirt be too rocky by far,
That's why good folks all round my cabin lot
Get their's from a mason jar!

Rocky Top, you'll always be
Home sweet home to me,
Good ole Rocky Top,
Rocky Top Tennessee!

Fish: Boy this dancing is fun.

Donna Darlin': *(points)* Something is a stir yonder near the porch!

Crook: Yeah, everybody is putting ever-thang down and headin' over yonder!

Beau: The music is stopping, so let 's go!

Mrs. McNeill: *(addresses the gathering students from the porch)*; Everybody! Reason

we're all gathering is that it's time for the great Easter egg hunt.
Some of you remember this from last year.

Unknown voice in the crowd: Yeah! This is the one with the Lucky Egg!

Mrs. McNeill: Yes, that's right. We have the lucky egg this year, with a grand prize inside. This lucky egg on this occasion is emerald green. Last year it was blue. It's a big one like last year, however. So let's gather 'round! One, two, three, let's go!

Fish: If you find it or if I find it, let's agree to split what's inside.

Beau: Alright, since you're my best friend.

Gene Coffee: An' Peanuts isn't around!

Donna Darling: But I'm around, honey!

Beau: (*eggs in hands*) I found a few yellow, a few blue, and one pink egg in the bushes, look!

CL: Yeah! Me too, look!

Crook: Lookie here! Lookie here, boys, I got it! I found the lucky egg!

Mrs. McNeill: (*From the porch*); Come up here Crook!

Crook: (*racing up the steps*) See Mrs. McNeill? I got it right here!

Mrs. McNeill: Open it up. Show everybody what you've found

Crook: Wow boys, what a good thrill! It's a Hundred Thousand Dollar bar, a gold ring, and a hundred dollar bill! Here (*holds the bill up*) Don't ya see? Look at me!

Mrs. McNeill: Anything you'd like to say, Crook, you little star of our show here?

Crook: Yeah! Could Twyla come up here?

Twyla Clothcutter: I'm on my way up, darlin.

Crook: Here, take this golden ring and be my partner at the dance.

Twyla Clothcutter: I would be honored.

The crowd claps
Stage darkens

Twyla, Crook, Gene, Beau, Donna Darling, Mrs. McNeil, Fish, exit

Scene Two

Sack races and horseshoe tosses in back of baseball field. May pole dance is going on.

Enter Donna Darling

Donna Darlin': Well, with the May Pole dance going on, you know the next event will be the festival dance.

Beau: I had a feeling maybe so.

Donna Darlin': An' just think boy, you hadn't even kissed me yet today.

Beau: Well, here's a good one flat on the left cheek. *(kisses Donna)*

Donna Darling: Hmm, that's so nice, Beau.

Beau: It couldn't be enough for everything you've done.

Donna Darling: *(sighs)* We've done much today. Don't you think?

Beau: We've ran the foot races, tossed the horseshoe, danced the morning jig, found a bunch of easter eggs.

Band in the background plays Tennessee Waltz

Lead singer: I was dancing with my darling

To the Tennessee waltz,
When an old friend I happened to see
As I introduced her to my loved ones,
While I was dancing took her from me.

I remember the night,
And the tennessee waltz,
Now I know just how much I have lost,
Yes, I lost my little darling on the night of
Tennessee waltz.

Crook: It's time for the festival dance, let's all go!

Gene Coffee: Oh my, it's all slow songs now.

Donna Darling: That's why we need partners. I'm glad I've got mine here with me.

CL: That's because Peanuts ain't here.

Fish: Would she share, Beau? Do ya thank so?

Beau: Maybe, in this situation, crazy station.

Fish: Why?

Beau: (smiles) You don't know what I know.

Donna Darlin': (*smiles warmly, glances up at Beau*); The spirits of the wild wood saved
the best for last.

Band plays The Rose Of Alabama

Beau: (takes Donna's left hand and places his right arm around her waist)

Lead singer: Away from Mississipii's vale,
With my 'ol hat there for a sail,
I crossed upon a cotton bale
To Rose of Alabama.

I landed on a far sandbank,
I sat upon a hollow plank,
And there I made the banjo twank,
For Rose of Alabama.

Oh brown Rosie,
Rose of Alabama!
Sweet tobacco posey
Is my Rose of Alabama.

I says to her sit as you please,
Across my leg she took her ease,
“Tis good to go upon thy knees,
Said Rose of Alabama.

The river rose the cricket sang,
The lightning bug did flash his wing.,
Then like a rope my arms I fling,
Round Rose of Alabama!

We hugged so long I cannot tell,
My beautiful rose seemed to like it so well,
My banjo in the river fell,
Oh Rose of Alabama.

Like Alligator after prey,
I dive in but it floats away,
An’ all the while it seems to say,
Oh Rose of Alabama!

Now every day come rain or shower,
I hunt my banjo for an hour,
And meet my sweet tobacco flower,
Oh Rose of Alabama!

Oh fare thee well ye belles of Spain,
And fare thee well to Liza Jane,
Ye charms shall all be put to shame
By Rose of Alabama.

Everybody begins to slow dance

Time passes...

The couples slow dance to seven other songs.

Amazing Grace plays

Donna Darling: Well, since this song has ended, I guess the dance is over for this year,
Beau. We've danced a bit today, for sure.

Beau: Guess it is, Donna. I've surely had fun.

Donna Darlin': Want a walk?

Beau: Of course, my favorite dance partner, but to where?

Donna Darling: I have a surprise for you.

Beau: You're full of surprises, but what this time?

Donna Darlin': Do you know where the clover patch is?

Beau: Donna, I know where many a-clover patch is.

Donna Darling: But do you know where heaven's clover patch is?

Beau: Not exactly, I suppose. Wherever heaven is, I guess.

Donna Darling: Well, come with me my little Beau-bo. Let me take the likes of you to
heaven.

Beau: In truth, Donna, you already have.

*Donna and Beau walk hand in hand toward the rear left corner of the ball field, stepping
into the woods.*

Beau: (*whispers*) This is dangerous country Donna.

Donna Darling: What's to fear, my Beau-bo dear?

Beau: Well, there's Hidebehinds, Golly-Whomps, and great big ole Wampus Cats in here!

Donna Darling: OK? Let's turn to the right and walk a spell through them sweet gum 'N pine trees, since we are in here good.

Beau: But you don't understand. There's YaHoos and Flea-backs in here too. They live up in here! (*Turns, suddenly gasps!*)

Donna Darlin': (*smiling*) Do you know where we are now, Beau?

Beau: Why, we're at the kissing tree, Donna, and it has a big yellow ribbon tied around it. How did we get to it walkin' from this way? (*points*) Look!

Donna Darling: That's right, Beau-bo, and the tree is all yours now.

Beau walks over toward the tree, doesn't glance back

Donna Darlin': (*as Beau walks away*) I enjoyed my days with you very much. Thank You forever, Beau. Nobody anywhere can ever take that away from me.

Lights dim slightly. Donna Darling quietly exits, lights ease back on

Beau: Wow! Donna, you're the best! Wow! I'm overjoyed.

Beau: (*walks around the huge live oak tree without glancing backwards*) I can't believe it! I'm so happy!

Peanuts: (*suddenly steps from around the tree*) I knew you would come through all along!

Beau: (*gasps*) Well, I had a little help from my friends, ya know.

Peanuts: Oh yeah? Friends? Which ones?

Beau: Well, (*points*) Donna 's right there.

Peanuts: Where? In the shadows? I don't see her.

Beau: (*turns around*) I can't believe it, she's gone! Where did she go? She was right There. Right there, I tell you!

Peanuts: Well, (*places arms around his neck*) looks like it's only us two now, Beau.

Beau: I see that, and I am so happy, Peanuts. I promise I won't get into any more trouble, ever! I'm settling down for good this time.

Peanuts: And look at what I've found Beau, (*she points, begins stepping out*) lookie here!

Beau: It's a clover patch, (*bends down, plucks several*) filled with four leaf clovers, look!

Peanuts: Yeah, like it was put there just for us, Beau!

Beau: This must be heaven's clover patch, Peanuts.

Peanuts: What is that?

Breau: It's a long story, Peanuts. Let me tell you all about it as we walk back together toward the school house. (*they pause, he gazes into her eyes*) All I can say is today surely must be the happiest day of my entire life.

Beau and Peanuts exit with their arms around one another's waist

Lights dim out as they go

Curtains fall

The End

Anastasia



H.L. Dowless

Cast of Characters

Delmont Hamilton

Bo Hump

Davin

Fat Suzy

grandPa

Jimbo

King Puck

Anastasia

Pap

Raven

Burman

Riverboatman #1

Riverboatman #2

Riverboatman #3

Local

A rolling hillside covered in thick oak, holly, and rhododendron dominates the landscape. Through this landscape a very wide and deep river meanders. The bank on either side forms a high, almost flat cliff face, reaching more than one hundred feet up. Flowing upstream on the right side, nestled away inside the rolling landscape and the vegetation, sits the elegant mountain town of Highland Haven, filled with classical marble architecture and grand glorious mansions with huge doric columns. On the left side is tucked away the quiet reserved town of Meadowshire. The architecture is very modest brick and timber framed. In both places the daily lifestyle is well entrenched, the people patriotic and proud, and the atmosphere is timeless.

*Act I
Scene I*

Meadowshire 1936

A small cabin with chickens, goats & pigs in back

Enter Delmont Hamilton & Fat Suzy

Delmont Hamilton: (*tossing freshly ground cornmeal to the chickens*) Well there Fat Suzy, lay us some more eggs lady. We need all we can get. Besides liquor, it's nearbout all we can fetch 'round here of value these days. We can fetch a fresh cured ham ever now and again, but besides eggs and liquor, that's about it for the Hamiltons of Porter's Corner here.

Fat Suzy: (*clucks, whines, scratches around, pecks grain, glares up toward Delmont*)

Delmont Hamilton: Yeah, you're about right, ole Suzy there. I feel the same way. We'll get by somehow, that I know. These times are rough, but Clan Hamilton has seen far worse days in its time. You know I pick and shuck corn seems like from dawn until dusk. If I'm not shucking corn and strippin' the grain from the cobs, I'm

grindin' it into meal for our big still over yonder in Shepard's Holler.

Fat Suzy: *(scratches, clucks, whines, pecks grain, tilts head, glares hard into Delmont's eyes)*

Delmont Hamilton: You know Suzy, I swear you're right again. We've been doin' pretty dumb good with the still, of late. Ha ha ha, them revenueurs comb the ridges all up and down, but they all overlook the holler rock yonder up on hangman's hill in Shepard's Holler. I suppose most of 'em are know-nothin' Yankees from way out of town somewhere. They wouldn't ever know such-truck as this like we all do, oh Suzy Q.

Fat Suzy: *(pauses, tilts head, whines long, glares directly into Delmont's eyes)*

Delmont Hamilton: You know what's really funny, Suzy? I probably shouldn't tell this now, so please don't go 'round talkin' about it. The other night some shinnners came into Shepard's there, where Clan Hamilton haunts. *(laughs)* Well ole man Raymond Burney was with us that night. You know, ole crazy Raymond Burney, who'll do anything if somebody strikes him wrong. Well, ole Raymond decided to put a stop to this nonsense. So he packed in a square flashlight battery, some wire, a good rattrap, and a duck taped bundle of four dynamite sticks with electrical blasting caps. We were gonna toss the bundle and spring a big one on the shinnners. So much for competitors on our turf.

Fat Suzy: *(pauses, head tilted, glaring directly into Delmont's eyes, slowly whining)*

Delmont Hamilton: You won't believe what happened next, ole Suzy. I can't stop laughing about it. We fixed the whole dumb batch of 'em good! I'll tell ya all about it, here and now. Bot that time we got into the area good, we heard a ruckus up Lolly Lackland's

creek, so we all took cover. Lo an' behold it was the
revenueers canoeing downstream in the creek up above us at a
nice clip. Suzy, even you could have told they were citified by
the way they all rowed. The whole deal was down right funny!
I can't get over it.

So ole Raymond says to us, "help me set this deal up boys, and
we kin git on with it. We can kill two birds with the same
dumb stone, if we move quick a-nough." So we did. Ole
Raymond had already drilled a hole through the body of
the rattrap. This he tacked carefully up on a nearby tree. He
took duck tape and taped one skint end of the wire to the hot
end of the battery. Wrapped a skint end of the wire to the
striking side of the trap, then he fixed another end onto the
electric cap of the dynamite. There was enough loose wire
where he could toss the blastin' bundle into a tree across a limb
high over the creek. Once he ran the opposite end around the
base of the trap underneath the striker, the circuit could be
Sealed when the trap fired. A small twig cut off at a forty five
degree angle and inserted 'neath the striker kept us all safe for
the moment, however. One slip of the touch 'n the devil would
have been with us, for sure.

Fat Suzy: *(tilts head, clucks, pecks grain, scratches)*

Delmont Hamilton: Yeah Suzy, that was easy enough, but the toughest part was last
of all. Raymond sent me o'er the creek with a string O' fishin'
line. This I pulled tight, then tied it onto the bait tray. Once
Pap set the striker, the rig was in, and we all eased out of the
combat zone at a rather quick clip, let me tell ya Suzy Q.

(Laughs) Once we made it out to the lookout point over on
Roosters Ridge, I saw the whole dumb creek basin light up in
the dark of midnight. We all left out of that area like foxes with
fire coals poured onto our tails. Let me tell ya ole girl, them

shinners must have shucked inside their coveralls when they walked into them ragin' revenueers!

I figger if they didn't catch them shinners there are some mighty terrified shinners who'll never come back into Shepard's Holler again, and some dumb and now deaf revenueers wondering what happened that they still can't seem to untangle. *(laughs)* I swear, one day in future times somebody somewhere 'll be writin' books about all of this crazy mess around here. Don't you think so, Suzy Girl?

Fat Suzy: *(clucks loudly)*

Delmont Hamilton: *(sighs deeply)* Somehow I'm gonna get out of this place. I like it here, and I've had the time of my life, but one day I'm gonna find a higher plateau to climb, Suzy. I don't know what I'm a gonna do, but I'm flying out O' ole Meadowshire one Day.

Fat Suzy: *(cackles loudly)*

Delmont Hamilton: What's it, ole Suzy Q? I kin tell, oh girl. I see the way ya cackle an' that look in yer eye, somethin' 's a comin'. What's it now? Give me the word. Might it be haint or human?

Heavy booted footsteps head in Delmont's direction

Fat Suzy: *(screams loudly and runs in the opposite direction)*

Enter grandPa

Delmont Hamilton: I knew it. It had to be grandPa.

grandPa: *(steps around the corner into the pen)* Boy, yer Pap is fuming like a mad donkey. What in tarnation ails ya?

Delmont Hamilton: What ails him so?

grandPa: Well boy, now you had them corn stalks to cut and feed to the hogs, and it still hasn't yet been done.

Delmont Hamilton: You mean the ones in the garden?

grandPa: No boy, now you know better 'n that! I'm talkin' bout the one's o'er on ole man Top Coleman's place.

Delmont Hamilton: Well, I thought we were gonna make beer 'n mash out of 'em.

grandPa: Now boy, don't gimme them high rock oysters, I know you know better! When yer Pap gits through skinnin' you alive, you won't be able to sit down fer a dumb week.

Delmont Hamilton: I don't get it grandPa.

grandPa: You don't git it? Is that what I heard you say? Well you know good 'n dumb well we made last year's dry shuckins into still fodder. All four of them stills are up 'n runnin as we stand here a-speakin'!

Delmont Hamilton: Yeah, (*sighs*) come to think of it, they are grandPa. Will it be Treble run?

grandPa: There you go again, boy. A course it will be! Us Hamiltons make and sell nothing less but the top of the line best. I ought to whoop ya myself for askin' such an all fired dim question to me like that!

Delmont Hamilton: I didn't mean to stir ya up like that.

grandPa: Well, an' them stills is another thang, boy. You, Jimbo, and Bo Hump needs to go babysit them thangs for the next week. Its yer turn to burn this batch. You uns pour it back in, and me, yer Pap, and Devin 'll do the

next one, an then you kin live free fer a week. You uns kin spend yer time cookin' bar meat 'n potatoes by the flames on the side, 'n takin' sample shots 'n dancing to the music of the thump keg. How's that fer livin' free?

Delmont Hamilton: I got ya grandPa. When do ya want us down there?

grandPa: I want all O' this done now. Dark should see you 'n the others o'er by the still cavern on Stymies Ridge there by Shepard's Holler.

Delmont Hamilton: Tell Pap I'll get a move on it now.

grandPa: (*stands frozen, stares, shakes head*) My word boy, what in tarnation er we gonna do with ya?

Delmont Hamilton: What's it now, grandPa?

grandPa: Boy, er you in need O some intimate conversation, er somethin' ?

Delmont Hamilton: (*laughs, shrugs*) I don't know, maybe.

grandPa: Well I seen ya a talkin' 'n a carryin' on with them chickens jest like 'twas yer best love er somethin'. (*shakes head from side to side*) I've never in my whole life, 'n I'm might-neigh eighty year old.

Delmont Hamilton: (*laughs*) Well it takes stress off'n the liver, and besides that, ole Fat Suzy there listens and even gives decent replies at times when I really need one.

grandPa: (*turns away, walks, mumbling, shaking head from side to side*) Well my stars and bars, I've never seen the likes of that boy in my whole life. If me 'n his Pa aint careful, we'll walk 'round the corner here one day, er maybe one night, an' we'll catch him a jiggin' chicken.

Delmont Hamiton: (*explodes into laughter*) What did I hear ya say grandPa? Did

you say what I think you did?

grandPa: (*pauses, turns around*) I said, if'n ya feel desperate enough fer attention like that, Ezra Greech still runs the Red Lantern Inn o'er on Yagman's Corner up town here. Been in business since way back before the Civil War. I know Ezra well. Drank many a pint with him O' the best treble run. I kin have 'im fetch ya a good, clean, attractive one. Jest let us know, boy. Don't worry, good women always love men who trim the hedge best. One night of stress relief 'll ne'er hurt. (*turns back around, walks*)

Delmont Hamilton: Naw, that's alright grandPa. I'll stay clean and without, until I stumble on a good one heaven sent, to none other than myself. The good Lord 'll take care O' me. (*explodes into laughter*)

grandPa, Fat Suzy, Delmont Hamilton, exit

Scene 2

Midnight in Shepherd's Hollow

Enter Delmont Hamilton

The others follow in single file behind

Delmont Hamilton: (*sings in a whisper as he gently walks along*) Five hundred pounds of sugar, a brand new copper worm, a welded up copper pot 'n a pile O' split wood fer a good fire to burn. We're pouring it all into barrels, boys, we'z all a stirrin' the magic churn, good flow 'll come out in swirls, all shall be perfect fer the next fine turn.

Jimbo: (*sings as he paces gently along*) Witch's brew 'll pour out soon, with good

deer cabbage and a bourbon tinted creek 'neath such a perfect full moon.
Nymph's 'll all be a dancin' when King Puck comes out a prancin'. We'll
gim um a jug and a sweet tobacco plug, cause we'll have big money when
ole cap'n Dololly takes a slug, and any O' you who don't believe?, well
you all jest wait 'n see!

Bo Hump: (*Whispers in a song as he paces gently along*) Can't ya hear that thump
keg boys? It makes such a beautiful noise, just a thumpin' whilst we
take to jumpin', an' them mason jars are bein' filled with moonshine.
Oh how for that splendid feeling the masses do pine!

Devin: (*whispers*) Hugh! You boys shut up! I hear sticks a-snappin' in the
distance. I sense revenueurs are about 'round in here now! The last thing any
of us need to do is to attract unwanted attention. We've been so lucky thus
far. I'm a layin' fer 'em, to speak the truth. I got a rake in the hay set fer
'em. They'll hit it, but they'll be madder 'n all git out when they do. I wish
I hadn't of put it in now. They'll know they're close when they hit that
thang.

Delmont Hamilton: You idiot! They'll have the troops back up in here, is what 'll
Happen.

Devin: Why do ya say that Delmont?

Delmont Hamilton: I'll bet you spiked that split river cane with a fire hardened
cane round, didn't you?

Devin: Well, what's the use in makin' a rake in the hay set unless its spiked? I tried
the split cane by itself and they didn't get the message.

Delmont Hamilton: You idiot! When that spike is stuck slam through one O' them
revenueurs, they'll have Pharaoh's whole army snoopin' around
in here searchin' us and our stash out. Once we make it in to
the still way, you go an' take that mess down Devin.

Devin: Well I'm scared to do that tonight like that with them stick's a snappin' like they are. I'll be cuffed and run out O' here faster 'n ole grandPa's best.

Delmont Hamilton: That's tough stuff. Tonight that rig is going to come down. The last thing any of us need is a revenuer down on the ground with a nine inch spike run through him.

Devin: What if I git locked up?

Delmont Hamilton: We'll bail ya out. That rig is comin' down tonight. So you go now boy. Give three bullfrog whumps before ya walk back in amongst us whilst we're all at still. No use in one O' us a cuttin' loose with a load O' buckshot in yer direction.

Devin: Well I ain't crazy 'bout it, but what e'er ya say, Delmont.

Demont Hamilton: Hasty now, hasty, we need the manpower round here.

Devin exits

Enter Delmont, Bo Hump, and Jimbo by the stills in the cave at Stymie's Ridge

Jimbo: That thump keg is better 'n at makin' music than the radio over at yer granPap's place, Delmont.

Delmont Hamilton: We'll all soon be singin' all the way to the bank.

Bo Hump: I'll sing to my holler cypress tree stash. The bank lost my faith long ago, and my whole family as well. I don't know about yourn.

Delmont Hamilton: These new fangled savings plans let me earn interest. How does your money fetch you any profit, Bo?

Bo Hump: I invest mine in liquor, treble run, and nothin' less. It still sells out at top dollar ever time.

Jimbo: Yeah, if you don't go an' drink it all, (*laughs*) you crazy know it all.

Bo Hump: (*looks at Jimbo*) You know who I'm worried about round here most of all these days, boy?

Jimbo: Don't have a clue, who?

Bo Hump: Ole Delmont there.

Jimbo: Really? What's it?

Bo Hump: He's been all edgy and actin' strange lately, like his granPap tellin' us about him talkin' to the chickens, a carryin' on a lengthy conversation. Hadn't you noticed?

Jimbo: Yeah, come to think of it, he has. (*turns to face Delmont*) So what's up doc? What's eatin' ya, bub?

Delmont Hamilton: (*sighs*) I don't know. It's kind a-like this. You boys ever wonder what lies out of Meadowshire here?

Bo Hump: There's nothin' outside O' Meadowshire. Ever-thang we ever need is right here. There's nothin' but darkness 'n evil outside a-these borders. You know what the preacher tells us all ever Sunday. Anybody who dares exit out 'll only wind up dead and a-smolderin' in hell.

Jimbo: That's what they all told us in school.

Delmont Hamilton: You be quiet boy! You never went to any school.

Jimbo: Yeah, but all of our parents and ever-body in town tells us that. The liquor we sell is to people right there in town. Ever-thang we'll ever need is right there in that town.

Bo Hump: I know folks who've never left town before. They tell me nothin but darkness, chaos, and death lies out there, and man-beasts rather than Men. So I'm dumb shore stayin' rich 'ier fer the rest O' my life.

Delmont Hamilton: I read books. I know there's somethin' else out there for me. I want the best that life has to offer myself. I want the adventure of experiencing better and something different.

Jimbo: Well, all I kin say to you Delmont, is fer you to fetch some more wood fer that still, then go fetch them gallon jugs underneath the worm on them other three. You'll have to replace 'em, now. Stash 'em good over yonder in the cleft on the stone wall. Bo Hump and me 'll check the mash level in these stills whilst ya do that now. Any backset left inside needs cleanin' out. We'll use it fer hog bait near Porky's Sandcastle. You know, out yonder where them big boars come from.

Delmont Hamilton: Yeah, guess you're right. I'll get a move on.

Three cricket chirps in sudden succession, pause, then three more

Bo Hump: Hugh, what 've we heard? Hugh, now.

Jimbo: I hear heavy breathin', take cover, quick!

All scatter into the surrounding vegetation

Enter Devin

Devin: *(pauses behind a large live oak)* Howl! Soooey! Hoo, hoo, hoo!

Delmont Hamilton: *(steps out of cover)* I thought it was you son, but we couldn't take any chances.

Devin: I took my set up down, but somebody had been movin' around over yonder. Tracks don't lie, Delmont. One O' them boot tracks had the print of a big

nail, a smaller ‘un, and another big nail on it, at a diagonal angle. I figure he does it that way because he gets a tighter refit on his boot heel.

Jimbo: And only one man does his boots that way, and we all know who that is,
Right?

Bo Hump: Yeah, ole Jay Fergusson, the chief revenuer from El Dego downstream
a ways from Meadowshire.

Delmont Hamilton: Is El Dego a bad place Hump?

Bo Hump: It's like hell. That's why ole Fergusson moved here to Meadowshire, up
in Porter's Point.

Jimbo: Well do tell, eh? That's where them people with the attitude are, over the
railroad tracks there. El Dego, I remember the name well.

Devin: Yeah, they all are bad, comin' from that place. They get their kicks a-tryin'
to suck up to the government like they do and catch us all in somethin'
over here.

Delmont Hamilton: Some good lookin' women come from over that way. I swear
all of 'em I ever laid eyes on had a dandy face and body that
would stop a freight train to go with it.

Jimbo: I'll let you all in on a secret. I had a good go with maybe five of 'em
Already.

Bo Hump: Don't you dare try and shuck us son. We know you've been to The Red
Lantern. Ninety five percent of the women he keeps comes from over
yonder in El Dego. So tell us how much ya paid. All of them
El Dego women are mercenary now.

Jimbo: I traded out a gallon of shine. She split it with her own Pap, 'n her Pap lent
me his own bed so's I could take her out to pasture. Personally, I couldn't

believe it myself.

Bo Hump: So how long ago was this?

Jimbo: Maybe two nights ago, but I had been droppin' by for might near two weeks steady.

Devin: Ya feel any burnin', or pain in ya lower stomach?

Jimbo: No, can't say as I have, right off hand.

Bo Hump: Any white discharge, son?

Jimbo: Yeah, a bit last night, but no pain. What of it?

Devin: My word man, your goose is cooked! You hear me? An' ya come back fer seconds and thirds, eh?

Bo Hump: Well Delmont, we had better get all we can out O' him tonight. Why don't we move the stash we already have? We kin put it up over by Crazy Woman Creek, high up in the cliff wall yonder. We all kin sleep yonder to boot, just to stay safe.

Delmont Hamilton: Sounds like a fine idea. Let's move on it now. The coast should be clear tomorrow night. We can move the stash back down, clean out the back sludge, purge out the stills, then pour the batch we jest cooked up back inside the still. In a week we all kin be sittin' out loungin' and sippin', plugin' a few deer and pig for the fodder, whilst our other crew cooks the third run of it.

Devin: Yeah, I like the sound of that third run, otherwise known as the Golden Run.

Jimbo: The Money Run.

Delmont Hamilton: *(laughs)* Yeah, but you ole Jimbo.. *(shakes his head)* You'll be over at Aunt Saddle Bizzell's rooster ranch.

Jimbo: Well I ne'er hear-ed of her myself. Who is she?

Delmont Hamilton: She's mite-near the only doctor around fer many miles. She works on animals and men fer miles around. Loads of prune juice, five pound of white sumac root powdered, of the small red kind two pounds, one double hand full of black or dew berry brier root, a double handful of persimmon bark. This is all boiled down in ten or twelve gallons of water, then strained. I see a whole big coffee can of it with your name written all over It, come tomorrow, son!

Devin: You'll be drinkin' 'n a-shuckin' yourself into a skeleton, but you'll learn not to play with hornet's nests when ya finally do heal. At least, all of us hope you'll learn yer lesson.

Delmont Hamilton: Well, let's git this run moved and stashed. It's might-neigh twelve hundred gallon jugs here. At midnight tomorrow we kin drop the run back into the stills. We'll take turns sittin' 'n standin' on point till we git this mess run back out and stashed up again. Jimbo should be hurt sore by then, and in big need of relief *(laughs)*.

All the others laugh

Delmont, Devin, Bo Hump, Jimbo exit

Scene 3

Midnight back down by the stills

Enter Delmont, Bo Hump, amd Devin

Devin: Has the last jug been taken down?

Delmont Hamilton: I believe Bo Hump 'll be walkin' the final one in soon.

Devin: Want 'll we do with Jimbo? He's rolling around on the cave floor in deep Pain. (*laughs*) It seems like he will learn his lesson some time.

Delmont Hamilton: Sometimes I say that about us now, doing this. Clan Hammilton has been runnin' shine for more than three hundred years. Back when we lived in the Scottish hill country we were runnin' shine. It's sure been a fun action filled life, but is the risk really worth it?

Devin: Have any of ya ever been caught at it? I don't recollect if so.

Delmont Hamilton: Uncle Jeb just got out of the can last month. He pulled two years in the Federal pen, bustin' big rocks into little ones, all day long. It broke 'im. He's out. He'll cook up a small batch fer home use and casual sales, but that's about it. His big times at still are over forever.

Devin: I hear footsteps in the woods around here in the day time. I can't believe how they all overlook this holler where our operation is.

Enter Bo Hump with a filled gallon jug in his hand

Bo Hump: Better be on our wares boys. People are movin' about in here.

Delmont Hamilton: Think that's King Puck and his fairy patrol.

Bo Hump: He'll turn a dime, won't he?

Delmont Hamilton: Not if we pay 'im in hooch. That's all he's a-wantin'.

Bo Hump: How'd he earn such a name?

Delmont Hamilton: All he had were women, but these women are not like any other. They can cook shine, hide, and fight better 'n half the men out there.

Bo Hump: How do they look?

Delmont Hamilton: Better N a ten point buck on the ground in front of my gun, and that's a beautiful sight, mind ya!

All three begin opening the copper still pots, cleaning them out

Devin: We must scrub well with clorox bleach before we reload these things. Let's lay the sludge in one spot. I'll ease out and put it where we bait the hogs, soon as we reload these stills.

footsteps approaching, all take cover in the woods

Enter King Puck

King Puck: Hallo! Hallo! Tis OK Hamilton, 'tis only Puck, with more fun to give you uns than a ten point buck.

Enter Delmont Hamilton

Delmont Hamilton: I figured 'twas only you I hear'd walkin' round in these Woods.

King Puck: Where are the others?

Delmont Hamilton: Out N about. Shouldn't walk up on a man's operation like this.

Some don't live to tell about it.

King Puck: I don't, generally speaking, but now isn't the first time for me here.

Delmont Hamilton: Where are your good lookin' assistants Puck?

King Puck: Out N about. I have one who is mercenary though. You interested? I need three good jug fulls.

Devin: Which one?

King Puck: Georgia Moon. She's totes the most beautiful moon mankind has ever dared to kiss.

Delmont Hamilton: I know Georgia. I didn't know that about her, but I know her. I used to play with her as a pup, right over yonder back at Pap's place.

King Puck: You interested Hamilton? A shot O' smooth treble goes down well in her company.

Delmont Hamilton: Well I was speaking fer ole Devin yonder. I'm too busy myself for any side line action. I do know Georgia though, and I thought I knew her pretty well, at that.

King Puck: Boy these 'er tough times round about in these parts. Person's got a do what they got a do. Most O' her turns are with locals. One day she wants to do the right thang and marry. It'll come. I know cause she drank Hemlock Hilda's magic potion. It'll happen, but she's still free and available for you boys at the moment.

Delmont Hamilton: Well this here batch has to be cooked down. In four days I'll be back over at Pap's, and him and grandPa 'll be back here cookin' the third run. You and Georgia meet me over there then. The good stuff 'll be there a waitin' fer ya.

King Puck: It's a done deal, boy. Just thought I'd pass the word on. The revenuers
'er movin' about. They haunt the area a-lookin' fer stills and pig
hunters. Be on ya wares boys.

Delmont Hamilton: Appreciate the heads up. We'll catch ya around.

King Puck: We'll be around.

King Puck exits

Delmont Hamilton: Boys, you heard the man. I know he seems crazy, and he is, but
trouble is a brewin' all around us. All of us gotta get a move
on. Let's get this stuff cleaned out of these four pots, and his
fresh batch poured in. 'Twill be mornin' time soon now.

Devin: Once we git this shine poured in, one of us needs to lay up in here and
babysit to make sure it doesn't vaporize, and to water the fires a bit if it
does. The other two can lay out, and we'll all take our turn at babysittin' 'till
the batch is cooked. This 'll be less of us around to git caught bein' at still.

Bo Hump: Delmont an' me 'll make our rounds while you babysit the rest of the
evening and tomorrow. I fear we might need to route this trouble I sense
away from here. We might even need to relocate these stills, if trouble
should find us. (*faces Delmont*) Come on. Lets git!

Bo Hump and Delmont Hamilton exit

Stage lights darken gradually. Five minutes later they brighten

Out in the surrounding mountain woods

*Enter Bo Hump and Delmont Hanilton walking quietly, double barrel shotguns in
hand*

Bo Hump: Hugh! Hear that, mane?

Delmont Hamilton: Hear what?

Bo Hump: Hear them jays suddenly quieten down?

Delmont Hamilton: Yeah, I heard it. I hear that Indian Hen in the distance. I know it won't us who upset her. Somebody 's a movin' around in here. I swear the ole gal ne'er lies, Hump man.

Bo Hump: Yeah, we'll pause here 'n set still. The tiger a-huntin' us 'll show his-self soon.

Delmont Hamilton: (*audible whispers*) Gotta give that ole tiger credit, hoss, he don't make a single sound when he walks.

Bo Hump: What chu reckon we'll do when he does?

Delmont Hamilton: (*smiles confidently*) I got my own lay fer him, ole Hump mane.

Bo Hump: What chu mean, you psychopath?

Delmont Hamilton: Just what I said. He left a trail, and he's dumb enough to come back in at the same place. I've been a-watchin' his sign fer a long time. Mother Ruth saw 'im when the fly cloud flew into the fire in her yard hearth. As she gazed into the flame and smoke, the way they fell revealed a vision to her. She warned me, Hump, and she don't lie or misread either. She tole me right where to set my lay, and I did.

Sticks snap up ahead, heavy footsteps on dry leaves

Bo Hump: (*audible whispers*) Hugh boy! Hush now, shhh, lay low, she's a-comin'.

Three armed men wearing badges break through the brush. They turn to the left. A massive explosion roars out from the far left ahead of them. Shot rains through the leaves and trees. The three run back toward the right, terrified for their lives. All is quiet again.

Bo Hump: My word, son, whate'er that was woke the dead! Who was it, fer cryin' out loud?

Delmont Hamilton: That was none other than ole Fergusson his-self, king O' revenueurs in these parts.

Bo Hump: Well you've lost your mind now. He'll be back with Pharaoh's army lookin' fer us. Our goose is hash!

Delmont Hamilton: No he won't. It's just time fer a payoff. I'll send Jimbo back home to grandPa 'N Pap to give 'em word. Ole Fergusson saunters through periodically only to let us know it's payday fer him, that's all.

Bo Hump: How do you know it was him? All of 'em wore wide brim straw hats an' bandanas over their faces.

Delmont Hamilton: I kin tell by the way he walks. The other two are the sheriff and the deputy. It'll be alright Humpus Dumpus. You'll still be able to hump hand 'er high tail, so don't worry about it, sleep Tight. (*explodes into laughter*)

Bo Hump: (*shakes his head from side to side*) I hope so. I can't believe how crazy even you have become, of late. This whole dumb place is at least a bubble off plumb!

Stage lights dim until dark. Bo Hump and Delmont Hamilton exit

Scene 4

Morning time back at the still site

Enter Devin & Delmont Hamilton

Devin: I swear, there is so much more work to be done around here, and four hours sleep doesn't quite cut it. Somethin' must give, and soon.

Delmont Hamilton: Well I'm strong. This cup of cassina I brewed here on the still flame 'll carry me through.

Devin: What else needs doin'? I want to get everything cleaned so I kin lay back in a cool corner here and cat nap.

Delmont Hamilton: Well there 're bags from all the sugar, corn shucks, 'n corn cobs layin' around. Lets get everything cleaned up around this still site. We have wood chips around. Let's get it all up. No use in us tippin' off any revenue or potential enemy passing Through while we're out.

Delmont, Devin, and Bo Hump busy themselves

Twenty minutes later

Delmont Hamilton: Look Devin, ever-thing is cleaned up well and good, I feel. Hump and me are gonna go back into Monk's Cavern up on Rooster's Ridge. You lay here 'n babysit the golden run today. We'll do it tomorrow. We kin trade like that until all four stills run it back out completely. It shouldn't take but maybe four more days and nights.

Devin: No problem with me on that. I'll take my ease. If the fussil-oil wasn't so thick, I'd take a hearty shot.

Enter Bo Hump

Bo Hump: Yeah (*laughs*) and you'd shuck yourself so skinny, you'd be a skeleton we wouldn't even recognize upon our return. Besides, the first gallon or three we always run off and use for charcoal lighter fluid and such.

Delmont Hamilton: We'll catch ya later on after before sunrise tomorrow. The sun is almost ready to break, and I can't wait!

Bo Hump: Well you sure have more energy than me. All I want to do is find a dark corner and go out for a while.

Delmont Hamilton: I feel fit as fiddle myself. You head on over to Monk's Cavern, or stay here with Devin. I'm a goin' fer a walk myself.

Devin: Where are you headed out to? Got a woodshed dolly on the lolly line?
(*laughs*) Hey, hey, now, woah!

Delmont Hamilton: No, I'm gonna walk out to the great Riverboat Spread. The enchanted place of the Shawnee. I'm gonna sit fer a while 'n watch 'n think up on The Horned God's plateau.

Bo Hump: (*glares hard*) Yeah, I know what you're a thinkin. Now the world is a wicked, dark, and corrupt place outside O' ole Meadowshire. If your a dreamin' about sashayin' across 'er upstream into foreign lands, all there is are kingdoms of the devil, I tell ya. They talk about this all the time in church. I mean, we trade our liquor and get our kicks, but it's among our own kind; bein' the people of God, rather than among the sons and daughters of Satan.

Delmont Hamilton: I don't know. You both know I'm a man of adventure. I dare to take my chances. I could easily die right here, doin' what we do. I might venture out, boys, but I'll be back after midnight. Hump, you 'n Devin take yer ease. I'm gone. (*turns and walks out*)

Bo Hump: Yeah, you be careful Delmont, now. That ole spread is more 'n a mile across, so I've always been told. A big city called The Devil's Den is somewhere over there. There's a bunch of disease infected people who will kill ya and eat ya, so I've always been told. I never wanted to go there myself. I've also heard that in The Devil's Den, Uncle Sam wears lipstick and a dress. Only God knows what other debauchery he is given to.

Devin: Yeah, you be real-careful, now, Delmont. I wanna see you come home in one piece. You are aware that according to the preacher last summer, to venture out of these boundaries means certain death.

Delmont Hamilton: See you all later on. I'd worry all the time if I worried about dying.

Bo Hump: If you're caught out without permission, it's certain death anyway. You're cohortin' with Satan accordin' to the burmister here. You know the law in Meadowshire here, Delmont. We don't cotton to weirdos or any with the scrambled-up ideas of those.

Stage lights dim out. Bo Hump and Devin exit

Three minutes later, stage lights gradually ease back on

Delmont Hamilton is standing on the shore overlooking an area of the Shawnee River known as The Great Riverboat's Spread. On the other side he makes out a faint glimpse of what appears to be a shimmer of activity just beyond the trees. A log here and there floats on the river. There is no sign of people. He glances up at the rather imposing plateau on the mountainside some seven stories up. He begins his ascent up.

On top of the plateau

Delmont Hamilton: *(takes down his knapsack, opens it, removes four candles,*

three white, one black. Makes a triangle, with the black candle in the center, lights them all) Oh spirit of the unseen, hailing from those lands of exotic mystery, a son of man calls, anticipation of new adventure is his cause, into an infinite forward flowing mist, his soul is beckoned. Will ye lead this poor mortal making appeal in such need?

Response: *(only the whispering wind)*

Delmont Hamilton: *(gazing out across the wide river toward the opposite side)* Oh spirit of ancient trappers, of buffalo hunters, of warriors, of gamblers, of thrill seekers, of confidence men, and all those who dare to live mortal lives to the fullest; do ya hear my Earnest call? I yearn to venture afar.

Response: *(only the whispering wind, but slightly stronger)*

Delmont Hamilton: From earliest childhood, a fellow brethren I am. I've heard the tales, how we're to fear and live afraid, that the only good is where I presently dwell, and among whom I am surrounded. No books speaking of anything beyond the local precinct exist in Meadowshire's local library, nothing is revealed on maps, nobody anywhere here speaks of anything outside of Meadowshire. I long to know the truth. Lead me to it.

Voice on the wind from behind: *(a voice of wind)* You son of man, behold the eastward bend in yon river.

Delmont snaps around, yet sees nothing

Voice on the wind from the left side: Behold thy beacon on the stroke of nine. A princess in the sacred motion, an exotic kingdom, pleasure beyond measure surely awaits. So don't hesitate long, lest ye perish and thy soul be forever absorbed into a realm of indefinite ignorance.

Delmont Hamilton: I find nourishment in my sack, oh great one, I sit and contemplate. Where lies my future destiny? Where might my name become great? Are you revealing to me my chosen way? Shall my name live for all eternity? All I truly want is to have my golden day!

Voice on the wind from the right side: Beware what thou has already wished for.
Dwell in happiness upon thy golden shore.
Thy future has already been written in the wind. Thy prophesied destiny is soon to Commence.

Does not the stag and the falcon live by the day? Does not the fawn and the coney somehow find their way? Does not the sparrow and the lamb find plenty of nourishment? Is not the shelter of the mole and the fox heaven sent? Do not my words ring forever true, son of man, how more so shall fare the likes of you.

A deep sleep soon overtakes Delmont Hamilton. When he awakens on the ground, far across the wide river, maybe a mile away on what appears to be a tower of stone, burns a column of flame. Even from so far away it illuminates the nighttime sky brilliantly. An eerie powerful sensation on the inside motivates him to desire being closer in.

Delmont Hamilton: Oh great one, tonight is not my night. I behold a column of flame from far beyond the water before me. (*glances down at his pocket watch*) Another night, another night, duty calls. (*he turns and begins walking back toward the still site*)

Stage lights gradually dim out. Delmont Hamilton exits

Scene 5

Midnight back at the still site

Enter Delmont Hamilton, Devin, Bo Hump

Delmont Hamilton: How does it go?

Devin: Drip drip, it's a fine bit, guaranteed to get a person ripped. Those who refuse to believe can soon find relief, pull the cork and take a sip.

Bo Hump: It's smooth as silk and calm as milk, but tip the cup or howl like a pup, but remain calm to experience this corn bomb.

Delmont Hamilton: You two make me feel you've already tipped a cup or three.

Devin: We've sampled, shiners prerogative ya know.

Bo Hump: Yeah, one gets good 'n thirsty a-dancin' to the music of a thump keg.

Delmont Hamilton: (*chuckles, shakes his head*) I bet so. Any excitement whilst I was gone?

Devin: You missed it, Hoss. You missed it big time! (*laughs*)

Bo Hump: Yeah, I mean, you really missed it, Delmont. You missed it, good, real Good!

Delmont Hamilton: Well tell me all about it. I wanna know what I missed.

Devin: You remember King Puck I know, right?

Delmont Hamilton: Of course I do! What about him?

Devin: Well, he dropped by like he said he would.

Delmont Hamilton: Yeah? What about it?

Bo Hump: Well, he came by and he wasn't alone either. He has sweet Georgia Peach and Amber Sunshine with him son., and golly Molly Rae was ole Georgia a good one down on the fly, Hoss! You wouldn't believe it, Delmont. You just wouldn't believe it! That ole gal didn't hold back on anything. I declare I've never seen a set of sweet red lips look better on a sword swallower even at the best Barnum an' Bailey show.

Devin: (*laughing hysterically and nonstop*) And ole Amber Sunshine was ever bit as dumb crazy, man. Ole Georgia smiled soon as she walked through the entrance there, declarin' aloud to both of us that she was in great need of a nice rooster standin' at full attention, to go along with the fat peach she held there. It couldn't be anything less than right to make her gobble an' cluck.

Bo Hump: (*laughing uncontrollably*) While we played caboose hooking up to their backsides, both of them hooked up on the front ends. Son I went hog Wild a grittin' my teeth, let me tell ya! I thought ole Devin there would have a heart attack. He slung his hay maker so hard he had a back draft on his breathing and started snortin' ever bit like a goat sounds. I wish you could of been here, Man!

Devin: Hey Delmont man., he had another one in need with 'im.

Delmont Hamilton: (*chuckles, shakes his head*) So who was she?

Devin: She called herself Lola Daisy.

Delmont Hamilton: She stripped down and petted her kitty cat right there whilst we were both in action. We asked her why didn't she join in with us, but she said she was savin' herself all fer you! (*laughs hysterically*)

Delmont Hamilton: Awe, don't shuck and jive me like that (*laughs*).

Bo Hump: Naw, it's for real man. That really happened. She said she was comin' back fer ya tonight.

Delmont Hamilton: Naw, no way she said that.

Bo Hump: Well you gotta face the music Delmont. (*laughs*) That woman is after You.

Delmont Hamilton: If it really happened, then how much extra did you agree to pay ole King Puck? Nothin' comes for free, especially them kinds of favors. I think he originally said he wanted three gallons of treble run. So tell me boys, how much? Sounds like you uns couldn't resist spikin' up our tab.

Bo Hump: (*pauses, glances over at Devin*) We agreed to give him three additional gallons of treble run.

Delmont Hamilton: Six gallons! (*shakes head side to side*) I knew it man, I knew it. I knew somethin' was gonna go down whilst I was away. And when both of ya come down with black gonzo grunge you'll want a-fetch at least that same amount over to the witch doctor like Jimbo has. Come on!

Bo Hump: (*places right arm on Delmont's shoulders*) Relax ham bone there. All dirt comes out in the wash. Besides we've even got you in on the action will ola miss Lola there!

Delmont Hamilton: (*chuckles*) I'm too busy with my own things. But don't you dare trade out all of our liquor before we even cook it up.

Devin: Oh you kin forgive us fer partakin' in a little side action here. We'll both be good li'le boys from now on.

Delmont Hamilton: This run 'll be cooked back out in two more days. I'm gonna help both of ya tonight 'n stick around to babysit the still. Four o'clock before sunrise I'm gonna shag out fer awhile, then wakeup after sunrise. When I leave out it might be midnight before I make it back.

Bo Hump: What's it mutton-monger? I see you've got yer own side sly there, eh?

Delmont Hamilton: No, nothin' O' the sort. I got much to do and am doin'. I'll tell ya bout it in time.

Bo Hump: Well Delmont, you better watch yer-self now. You know I could always sense things now, 'n my gut sense ain't goin' very good fer you rite about now.

Stage lights gradually dim out.. Devin, Bo Hump exit. Three minutes later the lights gradually brighten back on

1000 hrs

Back at the Great Riverboat's Spread

On the Horn God's Plateau

Enter Delmont Hamilton

Delmont Hamilton: *(opens his nap sack, takes out three white candles and one black. Arranges white candles in a triangle before him as he sits facing the wide surging river. He places the black one in the center. He lights all)* Oh great one, lord of adventurers, master of risk takers, king of all those who dare to step outside of their comfort zones when the risk is all or nothing, do you hear my call?

Momentary pause, no reply, whispering wind

Delmont Hamilton: To the ancient Greeks you were Atalanta. To the British you were Cernunnos, to the natives in America you were called Wakan Tanka. I long to feel the urge from a distant universe. I yearn to walk on new soil. My eyes ache to behold elegant people or more advanced humanistic beings. My mind is desperate for an intellectual awakening, since it only stagnates in that which surrounds me. Are you still present to heed my Call?

Momentary pause, no reply, only whispering wind from across the water

Delmont Hamilton: Oh, great one from beyond, have you abandoned me? Have you cast me into the void of history's forgotten intellectual wastrels, doomed only to drift through the world of man, satisfying only the most basic of biological desires? How I long to enter into a realm where elegant, sophisticated, immaculate beings thrive! I desperately desire to enter a place where opportunities for excellence truly do exist, and glittering advancement lies at the tips of one's fingers for the taking. Why can't I, too, not secure that reality in my firm grasp?

Momentary pause, no reply, only whispering wind from across the water. In the distance a raven soars across the water, soon turning, seemingly moving in Delmont's direction.

Delmont Hamilton: Where lies your sign, your cherished instruction, your rules for me to follow, that long dreamt path of brilliant red ruby leading to the glorious city of gold? If only you would give me a sign, send me a word, let me know something, what step, what direction, for how long should I tread where? Though I feel the wind blow into my face, there is not even a single flicker in the light of my candles. I feel as though jilted by a fabulous once in a lifetime lover. My world feels as if it yearns to end in a

crash of the waves upon these walls of stone. One way or
another I'll escape what fate has so callously thrust me into.

*Raven soars, then suddenly lands beside Delmont as he kneels before the triangle
of candles.*

Delmont Hamilton: Oh, might this be that special sign? At long last! How should it
be read? How should I interpret what I am bearing witness to?

Raven: From where does the wind blow? From where does the mighty river's
water flow? What makes it move? What cut the water's groove? Is there an
eye up high in the sky?

Delmont Hamilton: Those questions bear no answers, raven.

Raven: The wood fairies no longer have dancers. The deception was on you for
thinking that they do.

Delmont Hamilton: Raven, where lies the sense in your feeble song?

Raven: Delmont, the voice on the wind has done you no wrong.

Delmont Hamilton: The voice on the wind only makes me pine for that which is
still not yet mine.

Raven: Remember the beacon of nine? A princess of Xanadu shall then alight a
guiding flame. Once upon golden shore, nothing shall ever more be the
Same.

Delmont Hamilton: What, oh raven? How? Am I to fly? Will I live or will I die?

Raven: *(no reply)*

Delmont Hamilton: Who are you? What is your name? Are you my saving angel or
A cursed demon? Am I somehow to blame?

Raven: Aidh Damnu. Thy wanton yearning shall someday consume you. Now you have my name. Leading people on is my favorite game.

Delmont Hamilton: What shall I do? How shall I rectify my situation? Where shall this adventure finally lead me?

Raven: *(screams, then suddenly flies away)*

Stage lights dim out, Delmont Hamilton exits, curtains fall

Act Two

Scene 1

2100 hours

Down on the ground by the water's edge in front of The Horn God's Plateau

Enter Delmont Hamilton

Delmont Hamilton: Oh great one, I stand before the water's edge. I peer far into yon void. The water surges, sloshing gently upon the sand's edge where I presently stand. A shadow of a huge log hither and thither reaches out across the water of the mighty river, like so many arms on a shore bound monster. I behold it, piercing through the gloom and reflecting in the rippling water and the sky above. This beacon, this light into the greatest experience of my life so I have been told, is powerful. How might I make it across? Should I cut a raft? Then sign from the stumps will remain for all to behold and question, who shall soon deductively determine the cause of these fresh chops. To

merely exit Meadowshire stands beyond legality and is punishable by death, since wickedness and debauchery from beyond shall be transported back into these town limits, so goes the fears. Are there any words of wisdom remaining on my behalf?

Voice on the night wind: *(doesn't reply, only puffs gently)*

Delmont Hamilton: I clearly behold yon beacon of flame, upon a mighty pedestal of stone high upon the cliff edge. No boat can I possibly utilize, no raft, no wings, no great kite, no inglorious inner tube to be found. I'll strip to my waist, cast aside my shoes and shirt. *(removes shirt, socks, shoes)* My cutoff jeans shall suffice. Pockets filled with pouches of silver dollars shall suffice to make purchase of more, once on shore, if they don't weigh me down into the depths. Alas great one, please guide me along in this spectacular adventure. This swim shall be child's play for me. I've swam Beagle's lake an' Tecumseh's Branch. Beagle's Lake is broader, and Tecumseh's Branch is rougher.

Delmont Hamilton eases into the surging river water. He commences a slow steady swim toward the beacon of flame looming high upon the flat cliffside in the night distance. A steady breaststroke pulls him onward somewhat briskly. Bullfrogs along the shore give a steady whomp. In an hour and fifteen minutes he finds himself standing upon the opposite shore. High above upon the cliffside burns the beacon of flame. He sees no people or signs of habitation. For a few moments he lays upon his left side in the same, resting.

Delmont Hamilton: Oh, spirit of adventure, where have you taken me and dropped me off at? What cities and immaculate kingdoms flourish in such a grossly empty space? Where are the elegant intellectual people? Where is the art and grand accomplishment? All I behold are bare cliff walls, woods, the sound of bullfrogs, and Nightbugs.

Ahead a narrow path looms in the night gloom leading one up and seemingly through the cliff. Delmont Hamilton follows after regaining his strength. He passes through on a white sanded narrow walkway, after a ways he is standing upon a hillside overlooking a huge, immaculate city tucked away inside a cup shaped valley below.

Delmont Hamilton: *(gasping at the site)* Bless my eyes! I must be standing before the great city of Atlantis. Surly none anywhere could have been more glamorous than this.

Delmont Hamilton walks forward into the edge of the city. There he spies a man donning a faded robe of white.

Delmont Hamilton: Hello mate, who are you?

Man in white robe: I'm the local oracle.

Delmont Hamilton: How do you sustain yourself?

The oracle: By revealing the future course of events, of course.

Delmont Hamilton: What lies in my future?

The oracle: Toward the flames ye thought to fly, for the thrills of adventure ye have made a try. Oh, thy end shall be hard won. By the time ye find thy golden sun, then shall ye soon become undone.

Delmont Hamilton: Back home my family runs shine. I have cousins and friends on the thump keg at this very moment. It's been a family tradition for over three hundred years.

The oracle: Beware the good tidings, remain clear of the smiles. Wild arms also embrace, while mixed up minds entertain and beguile.

Delmont Hamilton: I listen, but still I shall venture inside. Only time knows the great pleasures I shall miss. (*walks on inside the town Limits, gazes around*) Where are the automobiles? Where are the hard surfaced roads? The classical architecture all around is beyond beautiful. (*spots a beautiful woman up against a wall*) What is with the flame by the cliff side?

Enter woman

Woman up against the wall: It's a beacon to the gods in the beyond.

Delmont Hamilton: What gods?

Woman up against the wall: The gods who dwell in the temple of Venus behind You.

Delmont Hamilton: (*turns, gasps*) I can't believe it! That temple is so beautiful. The marble has been totally polished into a perfect white. Oh great one, I can clearly observe your blessing in this place that you've delivered me. I must enter inside. Oh, how I must behold what most certainly is beyond any mortal's beholding.

Woman up against the wall: Tread softly, speak in whispers, never ask questions unless first asked. Smile, speak intelligently, feign complete sophistication.

Delmont Hamilton: I have to enter inside that complex. I cannot leave here tonight without doing so. Most certainly my eyes have witnessed Heaven.

Woman up against the wall: Tread softly up yon terraced hill face, and steps. Don't move suddenly to ward off regrets. Tiptoe quietly and venture inside, tonight you shall find your moment, determining if you should live or if you should die.

Delmont Hamilton: (*Walks up hill terrace and steps, opens huge wooden doors*)
Wonder of wonders, marvel of marvels, did the Gods move
down here from the skies? Surely this corrupted world of men
is one to be despised!

Low voice from within: Man from the fields, from whence did you arrive? Were
you invited? Did you simply dare to make a try?

Delmont Hamilton: I went on a great search for elegance and intellect. Here I am! I
could have never dreamed of such a place. This temple is
magnificent. The mysterious glinting walls, brilliant!

Low voice from within: Adventurer from across the water, in a small town of
infidels and insignificant. What do you seek from us?

Delmont Hamilton: Wise words, witty sayings, infallible advice would be so nice.

Low voice from within: You have traveled so far in search of your own star. You
have climbed so high, only to slip up and die? You seek to
be so wise, to discover your luxurious tool, but many in
years later on, shall swear you are a cursed fool.

Delmont Hamilton: Why, I'm fit as a fiddle and twice as nice. I can labor a little
and swim a mile thrice. So here I am after trudging through
thorns and sand. If I could rise up higher, 't-would be so grand.

Voice from within the temple: Thus, you are motivated by greed, you bear no need.
All of mankind is corrupt, but can they ever possess
enough? Only a simple cur is satisfied with his coat
of fur.

Delmont Hamilton: What must I do to enter inside this magnificent temple? I
deeply long to tour this premise.

Voice from within the temple: Oh wastrel from the dark earthy void beyond.

Behold! What building possesses the most stories?

Delmont Hamilton: Well, of course, a library!

Voice from within the temple: Oh corrupted son of man, what has thirteen hearts
but no other organs?

Delmont Hamilton: Well, only a deck of cards and nothing else.

Voice from within the temple: If one's uncle's sister is not one's aunt, then who is
She?

Delmont Hamilton: One's mother, and nobody else.

Voice from within the temple: If the person who made it doesn't need it. The
person who bought it doesn't want it. The person
who needs it doesn't know it. What is it? Fail to find
the answer and you have it!

Delmont Hamilton: Surely I stumble on its prospect.

Voice from within the temple: Do so, and find yourself with it.

Delmont Hamilton: If I was to make it, I wouldn't need it. Then it would be for
somebody else who doesn't want it or need it. This somebody
else then gives it to one who does need it, but does not know
it. Surely this could be nothing less than a coffin.

Voice from within the temple: Congratulations, you've verified the intellectual
qualification. Meet your angelic guide.

Enter guide, donning a purple toga
Appears walking from among inside columns

Delmont Hamilton: Surely you must be queen of this city.

Guide: I am a chief priestess and oracle to the worship of Venus. Welcome inside the eternal shrine of polished marble dedicated to the glory of Venus Adonis. On this night I am yours, and yours alone. You passed the test, Dared to walk upon a thin edge, so there you've earned your badge.

Stage lights dim out, Delmont and the guide exit

Scene 2

*Enter Delmont Hamilton and the guide
Inside the temple*

Delmont Hamilton: Tell me, oh dear priestess, about this temple and its grand significance. Are there any enemies of the temple? What is your position?

Guide: Back in the age when mighty Troy fell, many of the Mycenaeans and the Spartans from those days of old, settled here with their great pirated loot. Remember the Athenians rushed into Troy, put every living person and thing to the sword, ripped up everything that wasn't tied down, then stashed it carefully away into their ships. Primarily these ships sailed back to Mycenae, but not all of them. We all know of Odessia's great stray out into the distant seas, but there were also numerous others as well.

Plutarc writes of speaking with a stranger named Hippacartos who sailed to a distant westward continent. Well Hippcaros made it up the Great Spread out there, and settled here. His men are said to have built this temple dedicated to the Venus Adonis. His men called this place Highland Haven, since the spot felt and appeared as they imagined heaven does.

Delmont Hamilton: How old is this structure, dear guide?

Guide: This temple is said to be thirty five hundred years old. These columns have

a long hard history.

Delmont Hamilton: What is your name?

Guide: Anastasia. What is your's?

Delmont Hamilton: Delmont. I come from Meadowshire, across the Great Spread out there.

Anastasia: I inherited this position of chief priestess to Venus Adonis. My priestly line here reaches back fifteen hundred years. It began with the wife of a king who was saved by my direct ancestor. This wife's savior had a wife, and as a gift his wife was made chief priestess.

Delmont Hamilton: That is a spectacular gift for a king to bestow on a person.

Anastasia: So what is your sustenance? How do you earn your daily bread?

Delmont Hamilton: My family runs shine. I am a moonshiner by trade. The business pays decently and such is a big deal this day and time. However, I sincerely do hope to gravitate out of this business one day.

Anastasia: Why, if it pays well and you like it?

Delmont Hamilton: It's illegal. We are always setting up traps for revenueurs or traps for competitors. It is only a matter of time before we are done for. I want to be far away when that day arrives.

Anastasia: Is it good-shine? Does it sparkle in the moonlight? Do the bubbles make and quickly burst upon being shaken? Does its flame burn pure blue?

Delmont Hamilton: It's only the very best. Take me through more of this temple. I can't wait to hear about it.

Anastasia: Walk with me. We are in the foyer at present, obviously, since we are in the area immediately behind the double folding doors. There are only more columns to be seen from here. So come, see how we hide the most magnificent sights in plain view, right before people's eyes. (*turns, begins walking*)

Delmont Hamilton: (*walks, pauses*) Wow, that is nice! What exactly is it?

Anastasia: We are now standing before a highly polished forty foot tall grand statue of Venus Adonis, and her wise golden elf midget she has standing upon her left shoulder. Her hair is of pure golden strands. Her beret is of solid emerald. She has stood here since the earliest of times.

Delmont Hamilton: Do your people actually worship her?

Anastasia: Shall we say her presence is highly revered, rather than worshiped?

Demont Hamilton: Who is the god your people worship?

Anastasia: (*smiles*) Walk with me. (*they walk gently along, pause*) We are in the sacred temple of Zeus. He is the chief god of the sky. We gather here during times of the full moon. We don't worship the statue, we only focus our direction of worship by focusing our eyes. Zeus is the father of all. (*turns, walks, pauses*)

Delmont Hamilton: Where are we standing now? Who is this huge statue holding
The huge three pronged fork?

Anastasia: This is the inner *Sekos* or Chamber of Poseidon, god of the sea. He is the second most powerful god among those who we cherish most of all. He is adored and feared above all others, but Zeus. The story of our Trojan conquest is a tale dedicated to Poseidon's glory. You know that, don't you Delmont?

Delmont Hamilton: How? I never knew this.

Anastasia: Poseidon is also the god of earthquakes and horses. Troy was invincible. For ten long years our forces assaulted the city walls, with no success. During this ten year assault it was noticed where a wall far from the Center yet with no additional barriers, was weaker than the others. A series of continuous earth tremors sparked an idea.

Our crack elitist forces stood veiled from view on the edge of this wall. The primary auxiliary forces concealed themselves in the bushes and tall grass surrounding the area. Extremely well crafted weapons, chariots, armor, and some bags of golden coins were left piled up at a slight distance in easy view of the Trojan citizens.

These walls finally crumbled when the earth trembled sharply. The citizens, taking notice of the fine clothing and armor piled up in the field, rushed out to claim their share when the wall finally collapsed. Our crack elitist troops rushed into the city, putting everything alive to the sword, ravishing the women, ripping up everything of value for the taking, and smashing what didn't go. The entire city was put to the torch eventually.

On the outside the Trojan citizens who rushed out to grab their share of These piled up goods were butchered down by the hidden auxiliary troops who quickly surrounded them. As Troy burned, Mycenaean ships were loaded with loot at full capacity, making the entire ten year venture far worth the spent effort.

Delmont Hamilton: When did Poseidon receive credit for this victory?

Anastasia: Seventy percent of our military were mercenaries. These mercenaries were shopkeepers, farmers, and some were poets. When word of Troy's defeat reached the masses everybody wanted to hear all about it. For the first seven years all a poet had to do was relay the account. The story coming from a direct veteran made all the difference. After the passage of seven years the tale needed a bit of elaboration to fetch the largest alms donation in the public areas near home. Soon poets were traveling

throughout the Aegean realm spreading the news, so those who dared to travel could simply retell the account as it occurred. In time, the entire realm was totally covered and the tale had been told many times over, yet the public still yearned to hear about this spectacular Mycenaean victory. When the original veterans faded into the grave, the tale anywhere it was told needed a bit of elaboration to make it interesting.

Delmont Hamilton: So in other words this is where the Trojan Horse came into the Picture.

Anestasia: Yeah, I mean, are we all really supposed to believe the Trojans were so dumb as to not anticipate a trap when they saw this huge gift from their blood enemies standing outside their front gate?

Delmont Hamilton: It's a nice alliteration. It's a great story to read, for sure. Homer must have been a great poet who mainly entertained the well educated elitist elements of his society. Since most were literate, he decided to make a double mint by copying down his account of this story. So, therefore, here it is for all of us to enjoy.

Anestasia: That is about how our account went from the time.

Delmont Hamilton: Well, it's around midnight already. Why is it that the fire is built on the cliff face outside this temple?

Anastasia: On the hill behind the temple complex here stands an altar dedicated to the glory of Astraea, who vowed one day to return to earth during an age of future world wide chaos. We've had that already and all is still chaotic. We anticipate her return is imminent. The night skies are often pink. Her massive flying trumpet appears in the heavens. The entire city hears voices from her angelic company inside the rolling rumble of midnight thunder. The altar is the city's beacon for her glorious return. The acolytes bear the duty of cutting and stacking the fire wood. My duty as chief priestess is to light and maintain the cherished altar flame.

Delmont Hamilton: This temple is beautiful. I simply cannot believe I've found this place. I can't believe I have met with you. Nobody else will believe this tale back home either. Time is a-flying and I must make it home soon.

Anastasia: This city is positioned inside a cup shaped valley in such a way that it is veiled from sight by land. From the air a special blanket of sapphire Crystalline mist conceals us from above and from the eye of radar. The surrounding world knows not of our existence. So now, tell me in earnest Delmont, when shall I expect your return?

Delmont Hamilton. On the third night from now, if it's not raining.

Anastasia: Where is your boat anchored? I'll escort you out.

Delmont Hamilton: I didn't come in a boat. I swam across the river.

Anastasia: Why did you not use a boat? Swimming is doing it the hard way.

Delmont Hamilton: My town has imposed a sentence of death on any who dare to leave. Everything we need to survive and thrive is right there, so why go off only to court negative mindsets and ideas? If I bank a canoe or anchor a boat along the shore, somebody will find it and turn me in. Should I leave here in a boat, somebody somewhere will spot it. There are no second chances. Its death by stoning, and the entire town carries out the sentence.

Anastasia: Such a brutal way to live and die, poor soul.

Delmont Hamilton: Surely I hate to leave, but I must go away now.

Anastasia: I'll be certain to light the flame by 2100 three nights from now, to guide you in.

Delmont Hamilton: I shall surely return to such a beautiful town and such beautiful People.

Stage lights gradually dim out. Anastasia and Delmont Hamilton exit

Scene 3

0800

*In Meadowshire
At the house on Porter's Corner*

Enter Delmont Hamilton and grandPa

grandPa: So how's the liquor run coming along?

Delmont Hamilton: The run appears to be flowing marvelously. Today it should be completed.

grandPa: What's this about you being gone boy? We've got work to do.

Delmont Hamilton: Yeah, I've ventured out from time to time.

grandPa: Where ya been boy? A seein' some woman?

Delmont Hamilton: Sort of. I suppose you could say I was seein' a woman.

grandPa: Where is she from? Who's her parents and her next of kin?

Delmont Hamilton: You wouldn't believe this place if I told you, grandPa. You simply wouldn't believe it!

grandPa: Did you leave Meadowshire here boy?

Delmont Hamilton: Well, yeah to be honest.

grandPa: How dare you boy! You know there is nothin' but degeneration, devilry and witchcraft out there in this dark earth. We've tole you that all yer life Son.

Delmont Hamilton: Yeah, I know, but I read a lot. Everywhere is not bad grandPa. Some places are, but not everywhere.

grandPa: Yeah, well you keep on believin' Satan's lies. I'm 'll tell ya once here 'N now boy, he's gonna git ya kilt.

Delmont Hamilton: But granPa, you'd have to see this place. There can't be another like it anywhere!

grandPa: Where is it, boy? Is it where I'm bettin' your gonna tell me it is? Ya know, its death if ya git caught a-venturin' out.

Delmont Hamilton: You ever heard of a place called Highland Haven? Its way across the big spread.

grandPa: Yeah I've heard of it! It's a demon's lair boy. It's a witch's magic trick. You only thought it was a real place.

Delmont Hamilton: No grandPa, this place is real, just as real as where we are standin' right now!

grandPa: You met a woman there, didn't ya boy?

Delmont Hamilton: Yeah grandPa, I did meet a woman there, and she was ever bit as real as you or me.

grandPa: It's a demon, boy! It's probably what they call a succubus.

Delmont Hamilton: No grandPa, she's a real woman, all the way to the bone.

grandPa: Well boy, you jest keep on in that place, in that woman 'll be the death of you. Look at me when I'm a-talkin' to ya.. (*nods*) Now I tole ya so!

Delmont Hamiton: Unless love kin be deadly, I don't see how.

grandPa: Well boy, we don't have no time fer foolishness round here. We got liquor to run and money to make. We don't have no time fer any TomFoolery about strange places and the devil's women.

grandPa turns away and exits

Delmont Hamilton: (*steps around in the back of the house toward the chicken pen*)

Enter Jimbo

Walks up from the wooded lot behind

Jimbo: I heard you've been havin' adventures, Delmont.

Delmont Hamilton: Where did ya hear a thing like that from?

Jimbo: GrandPa just now in passin'. Son he huffed on past me like a whirlwind. He was so mad he was puffin' smoke like a freight train.

Delmont Hamilton: He wasn't lyin'. I had some real adventures. It was in a place called Highland Haven.

Jimbo: Other people have seen that same mirage, Delmont. GrandPa is right. I don't know about the demons and witches part of that tale, but you ain't the only one.

Delmont Hamilton: Naw, it's a real place with real people in it. I walked down some real streets, and entered inside a real beautiful temple like no place I had ever been inside of.

Jimbo: You know the town council here in Meadowshire 'll have you stoned to death for doing that, if they were to find out.

Delmont Hamilton: That's why I have to venture out of this place. I can stand being stifled by ignorance.

Jimbo: I don't know. How do you know any of what you experienced is real? I have heard about the mirage. That particular mirage is highly deceptive. How did you make it across?

Delmont Hamilton: I swam. I didn't take a canoe or jon boat because I was afeared it might be spotted and the authorities alerted to somebody traveling outside limits. All they would have had to do is hide and pounce when I came out.

Jimbo: So tell me Delmont, did ya meet a woman? I already know ya did. I want to hear about this.

Delmont Hamilton: Man, you wouldn't believe this place. There was this big marble temple with twenty seven polished perfectly white marble columns sixty feet tall. Well, there is this chief priestess inside. She lights an altar by the cliff face to the goddess Astrea.

Jimbo: What's her name, man? You still haven't told me that.

Delmont Hamilton: Her name 's Anastasia.

Jimbo: When you swim that deep and really wide section of the river, how do you know where to make landfall?

Delmont Hamilton: I can see the flame from here when she lights the altar. I swim toward that flame.

Jimbo: Is it much trouble making it across?

Delmont Hamilton: Only a steady breast stroke for an hour and a half, that's all.

Jimbo: I bet that woman is beautiful. What color is her hair?

Delmont Hamilton: A reddish blond, and she's full bodied in all the right places too, let me tell ya!

Jimbo: If she makes you go to all that trouble for her, she absolutely must be.

Delmont Hamilton: She is one hundred percent real, all the way down to the bone, Buck!

Jimbo: When ya goin' back?

Delmont Hamilton: Night after tomorrow.

Jimbo: I'm coming out with you. I want to spy this altar flame you tell me of.

Delmont Hamilton: Alright, come on out with me. We'll walk out at about eight or so. I want to be swimming by nine.

Two nights later at eight fifteen

Jimbo: So you take this little foot path through the woods out to the river, eh?

Delmont Hamilton: Been taking it out there for years. I've only recently made it across the deep and wide here.

Jimbo: Well I declare we've been walking now for twenty minutes but it doesn't seem like it.

Delmont Hamilton: See the river up ahead in the moonlight? Look.

Jimbo: Yeah I see it. We're easing up close to the river bank now, but I don't see any altar flame on the cliff-face there across the river.

Delmont Hamilton: You don't see it? There it is, *(points)* clear as a bell!

Jimbo: I swear man, I don't see a thing! You're shuckin' me, man! How dare you?

Delmont Hamilton: You don't see that, man? Damn! You must be blind as a bat.

Jimbo: All I kin say is that you need to be careful making that swim. I mean real careful Delmont. *(gazes out across the water)* I declare I still don't see anything, Delmont. Are you sure you're alright? Have you been into ole Jethro Dimple's hideaway stash? He makes some bad stuff. You know that.

Delmont Hamilton: *(pulls out his water proof wind up pocket watch)* It's nearing nine. I've gotta go *(begins taking off shirt and stripping down to a pair of cutoff jeans)*.

Jimbo: You be careful Delmont. I wanna see ya come back home.

Delmont Hamilton: *(eases down into the river)* I will, and I am gonna come back, just you wait and see.

Jimbo: *(shaking his head from side to side)* I swear man, a piece of snoot ain't worth all of this mess. You gotta be outta yer cotton pickin' mind! I can find mine a darn sight easier over at The Red Lantern.

Stage lights dim out. Delmont Hamilton and Jimbo exit

Scene 4

On the river bank by the cliff face near Highland Haven

Delmont Hamilton swims the deep and wide part of the river, moving toward the flame on the cliff face nearly a mile away. The wind is smooth, seemingly assisting him in his swim. He makes it to the river bank nearly exhausted. He rolls over on the river bank face down. He hears a movement behind him. He rolls over upon his back. His eyes are blinded by a full moon. A dark hooded figure suddenly stands over him.

Enter Anastasia

Anastasia: When I lit the altar flame I knew you were on your way. The waves appeared rather choppy, with much foam. I'm concerned about the huge catfish, mako shark, ten foot long water moccasins, and more that can be found out there at night. I was watching and waiting.

Delmont Hamilton: Everybody thinks you're not real back home. They claim this whole city here is a false mirage. Grandpa warned me, cousin Jimbo warned me. My neighbor, Huckle Buck, warned me. All of these people told me the same tale. But lady, this place and you are real as this river, the moon, and the bank here, or I'm crazy as a croakin' coot!

Anastasia: No sane man would dare swim deep and wide here, Delmont. So you tell me what to think about it. As for me and this city in the valley being real, are long fabled realms cloaked in misty veils real? Does a huge cave on a mountainside with the rainbow waterfalls covering its entrance and the mysterious stone town inside, bear a place in reality? Are there elegant grand kingdoms in the mysterious star lit beyond awaiting discovery? Are angels, spirits, and demons real? Can the breath of Dragons blow frosty mist? Can those among the living truly know about the realm of the dead? Answer these questions to find your sought after secret to behold.

Delmont Hamilton: Angels are real only if angels wear robes of purple and golden trim. Towns inside caves and grand kingdoms in the beyond await our discovery. Spirits and demons may be felt when

consumed in elegant hand held goblets, or standing all around Us and properly summonsed. The dead whisper their secrets into our ears and minds on the chime of the witching hour, especially on a full moon. So how is my answer to your proposed question?

Anastasia: *(holds out hand)* Stand up.

Delmont Hamilton: *(takes her hand, pulls up to his feet)* It does feel better once I'm up and standing.

Anastasia: *(reaches into her robe, takes out flask and small glass, pours it full)*
Take this and your strength shall be fully restored.

Delmont Hamilton: *(takes glass, tosses it back)* Gross woman, what kind of liquor is this! *(gags)*

Anastasia: That's no liquor, but you will feel so much better soon. Follow me.
(begins walking) This path was cut by the great unsung viceroy from the battle of Troy, Teucer. When the Mycenae filled their ships with Trojan treasure, many sailed far and wide to trade it for gold, or more gold than the gold already in it was worth. One of the places they arrived at was here, with the wealth they made. They purchased land and supplies from the natives. The natives didn't care for gold, but they loved strong wine and pearls. On the summit of the hill here we cannot view the city because of the crystalline mist lingering inside the valley.
Instrumentation is also rendered useless here. We are not on any maps, so claims made of a city and its inhabitants truly seem unreal.

Delmont Hamilton: Well what makes ladies donning elegant purple hooded robes seem so unreal?

Anastasia: The same force that makes flower tongued swimmers seem so unreal.
We are entering the main section of the city before the temple. See how it sparkles in the moonlight?

Delmont Hamilton: Those are the mica bits found inside the polish you clean the marble on the outside with. They will hold for maybe a year, but then you must recoat everything again. In the daytime they are invisible.

Anastasia: Very observant, and the answer is exact. The particular type of mica we use is only found in Pontevedra, Spain. None anywhere else is like it.

Delmont Hamilton: That is truly amazing. All of what you are showing me none will ever believe back home.

Anastasia: Are you certain what your eyes behold is real? What we see can be extremely deceiving, Delmont. Honestly, reality is never as it seems. We are all caged spirits in a body of flesh, inside a world of illusion and danger. Nothing ever is as it seems. A splendid memory is only a fleeting moment captured, but is it real or only a mirage of something glorious that once was, yet now is no more? Shall the invasive sub creatures from the dismal underworld below, slime their way inside and purloin our glorious perfection for all infinity?

Delmont Hamilton: Memories are reflections of a reality that once was. But is that reality now only a fading dream? Might this city only be a reflection stuck in time, yet captured here for all eternity?

Anastasia: Your neighbors and family more than likely had business people, traders, hunters, trappers, pass by here down through the years. They were ruled by their inner fears and never dared to step inside these crystalline clouds. Had they dared to do so, they would have been mesmerized by the dazzling beauty in what they beheld.

Delmont Hamilton: My family and neighbors are business people and traders now. We have an operation running shine. Many have moved all around this valley here. I can't imagine why they were a-feared to take a chance.

Anastasia: This of course, is the temple where I am priestess. We both were here the other day.

Delmont Hamilton: What are all of those people doing gathered up on the steps as they are?

Anastasia: These situations are called *debates*. The debates run as such. We all live according to some philosophical perspective. For the past century our philosophy in general has been that of *realism*. In other words, what one beholds before him is whatever it is. These can be things, situations, or circumstances. There is nothing to be inferred about it. As it stands, is whatever it is. Our dominant philosopher is a man called Xan. See how the men have formed a circle? Xan stands in the center. He is arguing in favor of the philosophical doctrine of realism.

See the man standing inside the circle but closer to the edge? This man is a direct challenger to the philosophical doctrine. His name is Lucas. He has found holes in the doctrine. He is saying that the sun is fixed in one place, for example, yet since the earth turns the sun appears to rise and fall. So therefore we must question reality. Nothing is as it stands.

Delmont Hamilton: So these situations are like intellectual duels. I like that, but what is the point?

Anastasia: Well, for one this is our primary form of entertainment. The argumentative point is to use the opposition's line of philosophical support for his conclusion, to support your opposing conclusion. One could say this is the ideal.

Delmont Hamilton: What do these people get out of this? Are they simply having Fun?

Anastasia: The chief philosophers in these debates own their academies, where they teach their philosophies. Many are wealthy. These academy

owners are challenged by opposing philosophers who wish for their Own doctrine to dominate. Also, wealthy business people and government leaders stand around to watch. The dominant philosophers are selected to host their house parties. These philosophers gravitate toward the highest bidders. In short, there is money to be made and entire livelihoods to be lost in these classy displays, Delmont..

Delmont Hamilton: How does your religion intersect with this philosophy?

Anastasia: If everything actually in the world before us is real, then manifestations from God must be, and so is God.

Delmont Hamilton: How do we define a manifestation from God?

Anastasia: A manifestation from God begins with this sensation that the power of God is all around us. We sense it in the morning sun, the wind, the rustling of the leaves, the flight of birds, and especially swans. Good fortune is a manifestation of God. These are real when they occur, and when no valid opposing argument exist to explain their presence, then it must be by the hand of God.

Delmont Hamilton: Do you live inside that temple?

Anastasia: I have living quarters inside. My job is to keep the hearth fire burning and facilitate worship during festival events.

Delmont Hamilton: Everybody walks around here or rides horses and donkeys. I see an occasional wagon or chariot. I don't see any vehicles anywhere. This I find strange.

Anastasia: Vehicles? What do you mean? We have the wagons and chariots. What are they if not vehicles?

Delmont Hamilton: You mean you don't know? I mean, we still have people with horses and wagons, but an ever growing number want

automobiles and such.

Anastasia: Please Delmont, I don't understand. Automobiles, what are they? Tell me about them. What does one look like?

Delmont Hamilton: They are kind of like horse carriages without the horse. They carry people along without a horse. The people turn a wheel, which turns the wheels on the side of the vehicle, and that is how they move about.

Anastasia: A lyre and a chelyse band is playing inside here tonight. Let us go inside. Smell the food?

Delmont Hamilton: Smells like roast beef and bacon.

Anastasia: It's mutton with a hint of bacon, wrapped in grape leaves. See them cooking on the grill Delmont?

Delmont Hamilton: They are cooked on sticks, with the sticks stuck through. That is really neat! What are the big long rolls with the stuff inside of them?

Anastasia: Those are called *Gyros*. Greek people have been eating them for many long years. The grape leaf rolls with the stick through them are called *Souvlaki*.

Delmont Hamilton: How much are those gyros?

Anastasia: Half a doubloon.

Delmont Hamilton: I have a fifty cent silver piece here. (*hands it over*)

Anastasia: (*looks it over, hands it to the cook*) This will be very appetizing.

Delmont Hamilton: It's all for you. I don't want anything right now. I can't help but

notice these stoves. They are like hollowed out stones filled with charcoal, and a grill top is placed over it.

Anastasia: Works pretty neatly, doesn't it Delmont?

Delmont Hamilton: I can't get over how all of these buildings, inside and out, sparkle in this night-flame and the moonlight.

Band begins playing

Anastasia: I know this song. It's called The Night We Forgot About the Moon.

Delmont Hamilton: It's a truly beautiful song.

Anastasia: Come, dance with me, Delmont!

Delmont Hamilton: Sure, I know the Virginia Reel. (*grabs her waist with right hand, her left hand with his right*)

Anastasia: Naw, it's like this! (*circles and high steps*) This dance is called *The Cordax*. It was here from the very beginning.

Delmont Hamilton: This is fun. I really like this dance. I like the way all the people interact so much.

Anastasia: That is what really encourages family and togetherness. We are huge believers in this.

Delmont Hamilton: It's tough for me to believe we are still in America. There is no other place in America like this.

Anastasia: Are we in America? Where is America? Tell me about this place.

Delmont Hamilton: Well now, I'm only from right across the river there. That is not all that far away.

Anastasia: Are you sure that is where you are from?

Delmont Hamilton: Sure, I'm sure!

Anastasia: Are you sure that you know where you have entered?

Delmont Hamilton: Certainly, it's Highland Haven!

Anastasia: How can you be sure? When you make that swim next time, how can you be sure you'll wind up in the same place?

Delmont Hamilton: Well, because you'll alight that altar flame.

Anastasia: What guarantees it shall hold its burn?

Delmont Hamilton: It will because I trust you.

Anastasia: You are wise to place your trust in me. I am loyal until the bitter end.

Band stops playing

Delmont Hamilton: They are putting their instruments away, so it seems.

Anastasia: Yes, it's getting late. Look outside, the moon has moved out.

Delmont Hamilton: That is a sign it's about 0230. It's time for me to swim back Out.

Anastasia: How do you know where to make landfall on your return?

Delmont Hamilton: I know the area that well.

Anastasia: I'll walk you back out to the deep and wide.

Down by the river bank. Delmont removes his shirt and takes off his trousers, revealing his shorts underneath.

Delmont Hamilton: (*Hugs Anastasia*) It breaks my heart so, but I suppose I must Go.

Anastasia: You must go, Delmont. When shall I expect your return?

Delmont Hamilton: In three nights from now, if it doesn't rain. I will get into the water at exactly eight o'clock.

Anastasia: I'll light the altar flame for you.

Delmont Hamilton: Until then.. Until the time is right. (*He eases down into the river and begins his swim*)

Delmont Hamilton and Anastasia exit

Scene 6

Back at the house in Porter's Corner

Enter Bo Hump, Pap, and Delmont Hamilton

Bo Hump: I saw you come in might neigh four in the mornin' Delmont. Ain't but one thang that kin keep a man up and out all night like that. For most men its liquor, but this house produces a free flow here. So there ain't but one more thang Delmont.. A crab wants his shell to crawl up into, come night time.

Pap: Son, we got work to do 'round here. We've been a-rollin' in the money. We got more orders for treble run than we kin fill! We gotta do what it takes

now. Me and your gradPa, an' the others are gonna hold it all under wraps for another day and a night, but then it's your turn again. Same with the runs. Once the batches have all been cooked up, we'll all take turns a-haulin' it Out.

Delmont Hamilton: Sounds like ever-thing has been a-stir while I was away.

Bo Hump: Yeah, much so, but tell us about your stir.

Delmont Hamilton: Nobody will believe me if I was to tell it.

Pap: Now son, I already know that you've been a trapsin' over yonder round that devil city. I know you think you are seein' a woman, but I'm here to tell ya it's a demon! That whole place is a mirage of the past, boy. What you saw won't real. The streets won't real, boy. You've been deceived by witchery and the power of Satan. Don't you listen to what the preacher says on these Sunday mornin's where we've gone ever since you've been alive?

Delmont Hamilton: If this place is not real, then I am sure fooled. You are right. Yeah, I've been talkin' to a woman. Let me tell ya, she has a body that 'll stop a freight train dead in its tracks.

Pap: What does this woman do with herself in the daytime?

Delmont Hamilton: She's the chief priestess in a great big temple that glitters in the moonlight.

Pap: Chief priestess? To what god, boy?

Delmont Hamilton: Astrea, I think it was what I heard her say.

Pap: Astrea? What kind O' god is that, boy?

Delmont Hamilton: Some kind of Greek goddess, is all that I know.

Pap: Its devils boy! That's what it is. I'm a-tellin' ya boy, stay away from that place. You know and I know the only holy place to live in is Meadowshire, the new Jerusalem, if one there ever was!

Delmont Hamilton: This is an intelligent woman. I'm telling all of ya. You wouldn't believe what your eyes are seeing if I carried you to this place.

Bo Hump: You know it's against the law. The penalty is death if you are caught. You know that. We can't swim, and you can't take a boat, so we'll never be able to come with ya. It's li'le ole you all alone.

Pap: I'll tell ya this much. The penalty will be death anyway. You are being lured into a demon's heart boy. That woman 'll lead you into some messed up places and will have ya doin' messed up things. The penalty for sin is death! Consortin' with demons is a sin, boy.

Delmont Hamilton: Now listen and tell me the truth. Does a crow not wish to fly unfettered? Does a stag not wish to run free, and unhampered? Does not the rain wish to freely fall without being held up in a cloud? Does not the sun wish to shine without any hindrance upon its rays? Well likewise, so do I.

Bo Hump: I understand, but we're all a-trying to tell ya something, Delmont. That woman could be the death of ya in that place, and we all don't want to see it happen.

Delmont Hamilton: Have you ever heard of anybody who ventured over there?

Bo Hump: Yeah, I've heard tales exactly like the ones you are telling. Most of These people simply never returned home.

Pap: Swallowed up by them demons boy! That's what happened to 'em. I don't lie!

Bo Hump: These few people I once knew talked about feasts of milk and honey,

walkin' on streets of gold, no pain, no sickness, and no gettin' old.
After a few times out I never saw any of 'em again, ever!

Pap: Lies are nothin' to base life on, son. The bigger the lie the more they are Believed. That woman 'll draw ya in, then you'll be trapped into a demon's lair for all eternity.

Delmont Hamilton: But she and this place is every bit as real as we are sitting here, talking like this. This place, Highlanders Haven, is a living, breathing, town or city. It's hazy and covered in rolling fog. I'll admit, I only see a building ahead of myself. I get a strange feeling that what I am seeing are ghosts, captured in the present from a long since faded past. This woman, Anastasia, I walk with her hither and thither there. I talk with her. This place is beyond description. It fits perfectly into every storybook fantasy I've ever had. How could such a beautiful scene only be a false mirage?

Bo Hump: I've never been there, personally, Delmont. I've known very few who have. All of their tales sound exactly like yourn. Then they simply vanished. They all swam across the deep and wide exactly like you are, since it's illegal to go there and punishable by death. We all figured the gators or them monster catfish out there got 'em or they drowned.

Delmont Hamilton: I've finally at long last found a place exactly like the one I've always dreamed of. I'm tired of feeling like I'm so repressed. I like running shine but Drummond Company, who lord's over this place where we live, acts like they're running a prison. We can't leave. We can't own our property, but only lease it from these pigs. We have no choice but to use their money, which is thirty percent more than national currency. We can't own guns in the property, since they own the property and often inspect it, searchin' for these items. They want us to eat this fake meat they design, and forbid us to eat the real thing. Running shine isn't allowed either, but they look the other way because they

can demand a huge payoff from us, if we are caught. Up in the hill caves we keep guns, bibles, salted meat, and many other items they don't want us to own here. But this is America, and why do we have live underneath some government and corporation's boot heel? In Highland Haven, people seem to live relaxed and do as they please. I can't stop going there now. My situation will have to run its course.

Pap: Well we told you so boy. This life we live here is all that we've ever known. If you don't want to listen, then it will be our heart ache, not yours, when you fail to return home.

Two nights later all three walk back down to the river bank by the deep and wide.

Bo Hump: What are ya standing here staring out across that water for Delmont?

Delmont Hamilton: Searching for the altar fire up on the white cliff face yonder.

Pap: See anything yet, cause we sure don't?

Delmont Hamilton: Its time..., and there it is! (*pointing*) See the column of flame yonder ahead? Look! Across the water there on the rise of the cliff edge afar.

Bo Hump: I swear I don't see a thing. Are you alright, Delmont?

Pap: We don't see it boy. I don't, Bo Hump don't... I don't think ten people could see what you are seeing. But are you really seeing anything boy? That's the part really a-botherin' me.

Bo Hump: You didn't get hold of Aunt Jessie's rhododendron honey mead did you? If you drink that you'll see spider webs everywhere, flying pink elephants, thousands of ants on the wall, and all kinds of stuff.

Delmont Hamilton: Naw, I haven't been into anything. (*pulls his shirt off, strips*

down to his cut off jeans, eases down into the water) I've got places to go. I see my sign clearly as a bell ahead. I've got people to see and business to take care of.

Pap: Fare thee well, boy, fare thee very well. That's all I have left to say about it.

Stage lights gradually dim out. Pap, Bo Hump, Delmont Hamilton exit, curtains fall.

Act 3

Scene 1

Some four months later back in Highland Haven

Enter Delmont Hamilton and Anastasia

Underneath a weeping willow by a garden pond, sitting in garden chairs beside a statue of Pallas and Athena upon marble pedestals.

Anastasia: It seems like I've known you for life, my love. We walk down the streets, into the cafes, into the many bistros, dance in the dance halls, we sing songs of passion and tranquility down by the river, we love in the Beautiful allspice bushes beside the gentle rainbow waterfall in the cool evenings. I truly feel as though we both are of one soul.

Delmont Hamilton: The swim across the deep and wide seems second nature at present now. I actually finished the hour swim in less than an hour. Maybe the kind winds carry me along now when they didn't before.

Anastasia: Give thanks to Nyx, queen of the night zephyr, who blesses our loving union. She thrives in the moonlight, she flies in the gentle breeze, the

Dew born from her tears of joy greets us all in the morning.

Delmont Hamilton: I sense an unseen presence by the pond before us here, a hint of spirituality surrounding us both.

Anastasia: Many unseen powers thrive all around us, Delmont, including Burman, the old man in a hooded linen robe, the messenger of impending doom.

Delmont Hamilton: What event is he forecasting? Why is he nearby as we sit among ourselves?

Anastasia: He makes no forecast at the present moment. He is sent forth by the raven, to frequent our presence by the pond. He knows I am a high priestess in the temple for the goddess Astrea. He honors and fears Astrea.

Delmont Hamilton: Surely he has something to say, yet I see him not.

Anastasia: Nothing I am yet aware of. What about you? I only feel his presence. He has not made his visual presence known to me.

Enter Burman, the old man in a gray linen hooded robe

Delmont Hamilton: Do you see the old man standing before the water in front of us, Anna?

Anastasia: It's your vision, not mine. Yet I sense his powerful, unsettling presence. Does he speak?

Delmont Hamilton: Not yet. He stands there motionless, staring forward in our direction as we sit, amusing ourselves.

Anastasia: He reveals himself visually for a reason.

Delmont Hamilton: He says nothing. The water in the pond commences clouding.

Anastasia: Remain attentive. All to me appears as it usually does. I see nothing of your mentioning.

Delmont Hamilton: I see choppy water. I feel a strong wind. There is sudden darkness. A man swims erratically, without direction. I now see a sunny day on a sandy bank of some type. I behold a dirt mound 'neath a stone of rose quartz and another of rhodolite garnet, surrounded by nine rubies. The old man only stands, gazing forward toward us, saying nothing of anything toward me. You do not bear witness to any of this?

Anastasia: The vision is not mine, so therefore I bear no inspired gift for Interpretation.

Delmont Hamilton: When we drank ambrosia, were there any herbs in it?

Anastasia: Nothing in it caused the vision you just had.

Delmont Hamilton: I have no idea what this vision means. (*reaches over, seizes Anastasia's right hand*) I do know that I truly adore you with all of my heart.

Anastasia: Is the old man still standing there?

Delmont Hamilton: He is slowly fading now.

Stage smokes to veil Burman, *Burman exits*

Anastasia: My love for you will not allow me to sit idle, without making some valid points. Is everything as you are convinced it is? What if everything truly is a mirage? What if our surroundings are only real in the moment, only to become ever fading dreams later on? This space before us may be an elegant pond, with a garden behind us here, but what was this space a hundred years earlier? Was it only a barren tract of forest? What

type of people walked upon its leafy floors? What was it like a thousand years before that? Five thousand years before? What about us ourselves? Are we real beings of flesh, or only spirits clothed in flesh? Do we fade away, never to return again, or simply shed our flesh and blood clothing? Are your eyes revealing truth to your mind? These are questions demanding hard consideration, Delmont.

Delmont Hamilton: There is only one question concerning me out of all. Does your love burn in a never ending flame for me, as mine does for you? I have no other question or concern pressing on me. Allow time to deliver my fate, yet I feel it shall indeed be a splendid one.

Anastasia: Surely my love is unyielding. Time shall see us through eternity from today forward.

Stage lights dim out. Delmont Hamilton, Anastasia exit

Scene 2

Back at Porter's Point in Meadowshire

Enter Pap, GrandPa, Bo Hump, Delmont Hamilton

Seated in the living room by the hearthside

Pap: All of this work around here, and you're out a-Tom cattin' round in the devil's den somewhere, and with a living succubus at that.

Delmont Hamilton: She's surely an angel, if one there ever was Pap.

Pap: You keep thinkin' so, boy. Many a good man said the same, only to turn face up in some forgotten corner. I don't know how many times we have to tell ya

that. You ain't the first to go a-trapesin' off and think he's found heaven somewhere way out among devils!

grandPa: Yer Pap is right. That place you speak such blossomin' tales of, I've heard tale of it. There's a problem with it boy. The problem is that it ain't real. Nobody anywhere knows why or how that vision appears. It only appears to certain people, boy, and evidently you're one of 'em.

Bo Hump: Neither myself or any one of us could see that altar fire out yonder on the cliff face in the dark of night that you told us about. You swam out to it and claimed you had adventures over there. This can't last forever, Delmont.

Pap: If nothin's else, these authorities around here will find out, and be layin' out waitin' fer ya, boy. I know some people and I might be able to buy ya off, but don't you or anybody else dare bet your life on it. These people here are unpredictable, I tell ya. Yer end could come about in a snap.

Delmont Hamilton: Does a wild bird suddenly placed into a cage, simply not quit eating and die? Have wild horses cornered high up on a cliff edge, not been known to turn and leap over when no other option for liberty exist? Have tall buildings aflame not seen dozens of people leap from the highest windows? During the battle of Masada, did not the Zealot revolutionaries draw lots and slay their comrades in arms, until only one of their own was left standing, rather than submit to Roman enslavement? Then so do I choose freedom of the wind over bondage on any given day or night, even if the price I pay for doing so is my Life.

Pap: Well boy, I tole ya now. I got loads of hard corn we're gatherin' out in the fields here and putin in the corn bin. Customers 'll be comin' in soon. Hogs 'll need fattenin', hams 'll soon need curin, last year's hams need sellin', roadside crafts need makin. 'N ya know what else, boy? Fall is near at hand. Winds 'll pick up, not to mention that water a-coolin. There won't be much in

the way of you swimmin' for a while soon. We've laid back enough liquor for our use and some to sell. We'll be back to doin' that all too soon around here.

GrandPa: We understand this need fer satisfyin' the urge to Tom-cat, but play time has to end. Besides that, a daughter of Satan simply ain't no good fer Anybody.

Delmont Hamilton: I don't mind helping out. A few more times out and I probably won't be able to go again until late spring when the water warms. I don't know if I can stand to be without my dear angel. I so dearly miss the walks out in that elegant park.

Already I miss those garden chats. I long for her company outside in the dark, so far away from such gloomy poverty and so many stray barnyard cats. I miss being inside that grand temple to Athena, so artfully constructed with such elegance and Sophistication. Only standing inside that place causes one to want to leap high as he is overcome with great elevation. But most of all I only long to be with her, the person, the flower, this enchanting lady. The one I'm so in love with, who vows to forever remain with me, and I don't mean maybe.

grandPa: Well, all of us have said all that can be. You've already cut your own trail and made yer own bed.

GrandPa, Pap, exit

Three nights later on the bank of the deep and wide

Delmont Hamilton: I know this tune by heart now. Sure enough, I spy the altar flame afar.

Bo Hump: Such a glorious sight nobody but you may discern.

Delmont Hamilton: Look! (*points across the water*) You can't see that? Look, it

burns with a column of flame reaching fairly high into the night sky.

Bo Hump: I can make out the cliff face in the moonlight. I don't see any altar flame, and neither has anybody else in all of these months.

Delmont Hamilton: It's because nobody really wants to see it. That is why they don't. *(pulls shirt and pants off, exposing swimming trunks, begins easing down into the water)*

Bo Hump: That is exactly what has all of us so afraid. You want to see this thing so much that you are seeing exactly what you want to see. Fare thee well. May the angel of judgment spare you a terrible price, Delmont.

Stage lights gradually dim, Bo Hump and Delmont Hamilton exit

Scene 3

While Delmont Hamilton swims toward the altar flame, the night wind increases dramatically. When he is halfway out, the altar flame on the cliff face before him suddenly vanishes. Three river boatmen and a local pause to walk along the sandy bank in the early morning.

Enter the three river boatmen and the local resident

Riverboatman #1: I declare, earlier this morning I saw it, right there..! *(points toward the altar)* It was just like she flew through the air into the Water, way down below yonder. It's hard to believe! Why such a thing? So young, with a full life still yet ahead. The shame, the unanswerable questions, oh the outright pity in it. I raced over there, but saw nothing in the water, like it had somehow swallowed her completely up.

Riverboatman #2: I wonder why such a thing occurred? Look! *(points toward the*

river) Something is afloat in the water ahead. What could it be ?
It isn't logs. It isn't river refuse. Why, it aint no canoe or boat, to
be shore!

Riverboatman #3: Looks like two floating corpses embracing, if one should ask
me.

Riverboatman #1: It's a man and a woman. (*turns toward the local man*) Do you
know 'em?

Local man: No, but I saw them around. The man had been swimming in the river
yonder. He came from across the water. You know it's illegal for people
to intermix from different towns and provinces. He had been coming
around for many long months in the dark of night. Such was the talk of
the town here.

Riverboatman #2: Who is the woman?

Local man: The woman is an artist, a real trick-zie some have said. She fantasizes
that she was priestess to some type of goddess from way back
when. There is an old abandoned classical styled warehouse in town
she told everybody was an ancient temple to this goddess. She longed
to break free of this place, she often told everybody from time to time.
She appeared to be at least a half bubble off plumb. Reality for her,
seemed tough to accept. People laughed at her homemade patched over
purple robe she always wore. Dope 'll do that kind of thang to a
person, I tell ya. She dabbled with Jimson weed, I always thought.

Riverboatman #1: So what happened here, you think?

Local man: There is a rock pile way up on the edge of the cliff face up high there.
Nobody knows exactly why it was there. She would go sit up beside
that rock pile at night and gaze out across the water in a trance-like
state. Every now and again she would light a fire on that rock pile, so
many have told me. She had some mighty big indepth fantasies, as I

have already said.

Riverboatman #1: So what happened with the man, you think?

Local man: Well, she must have been on the lookout fer her man, I figger. When he didn't show up, she waited all night. When the morning waves brought his corpse into bank here, she knew he had died on his swim to visit with her. So she threw herself off the cliff face into the water below, seeking to join him in death. They must have been alive enough when in the water together, for them to embrace as they have.

Riverboatman #3: Let us bury 'em in a lover's tomb here on the bank as a memorial for all time forward. It's the least anybody could ever do. It's such a pleasant story for people to ponder.

Riverboatman #1: There is a big red glassy looking stone right there up against the cliff. Another pink color of metallic stone sits nearby, and then pieces of stone that almost look like rubies. Let's gather all of This castaway stuff up.

Local man: I'll step back over to the house and fetch a shovel. I'll dig the hole at the base of where you said she jumped from the place on top of the cliff face.

Riverboatman #1: We'll wrap 'em both up in some old canvas I have. We can leave 'em embracing like they are. Once we make their dirt mound we can place the two bigger stones in the center, with the nine ruby-like stones surrounding it. For all time forward the world will know of this couple's sad love story.

Riverboatman #2: Tourists like to go down the river on the paddle-wheel boats sometimes nowadays. This would be a great place to stop and tell this disturbing, yet very real, dramatic story.

Stage lights dim out, Riverboatman #1, Riverboatman #2, Riverboatman #3, Local,

Exit, curtains fall.

THE END

One Fine Morning Down At The Sunrise Shack



S.R. & H Enterprises

Cast of Characters

Quinn

Gray

Jo Zoe

1st mentor, Christy

2nd mentor, Rachel

3rd mentor, Cindy

4th mentor, Daphne

Breanna

Elle Mae

Leah

Red

Isa

Dakota

Candy

Chloe

Hanna

Sherri

Darci

Morgan

Earl

Mr. West

Ace

Brandy

Jezebel

April one, 0600 in the morning. Several loud cowbells ring to shatter the silence

An elegant thirty room antebellum plantation house sits by a pond and a milhouse with a natural waterfall at the end of the water race, fed by a slow moving bourbon tinted wood-stream. In the back through an oaken wood stand sits a somewhat rustic wood framed academy building. Out from the academy building across a small wood pasture is a large horse corral and stable. Wild horses are routinely culled from several eastern state islands and the western great plains, then shipped in. Residents on The Sunrise Plantation Estate groom and care for the horses.

*Act I
Scene 1*

Inside the mansion house

Enter 1st mentor-Christy, 2nd mentor-Rachel, 3rd mentor-Cindy

1st mentor, Christy: Wake up! Wake up! It's time to rise and shine, you saucy Dogs. Up with your heads and out of bed! On your feet among the living rather than laying around like the dead. Off your pathetic cans! Into the freshly turned fine white sands.

2nd mentor, Rachel: The time is now! Go quickly to the restrooms before they fill. Time is valuable and is wasting away, like fine white sand between one's fingers. We have so much in store to accomplish today.

3rd mentor, Cindy: *(beating on a cow bell with a reed)* Get up! Get up now.. Red! *(grabs a cot mattress Red slumbers on, snatches it out from underneath her body suddenly)*

Red: *(falls upon the floor, growls)* My word, Cindy, you foul daughter of a black eyed whore, you! What ails you so early in the morning? Did your old man not give you any cake before bedtime last night?

Girls in cots beside her: (*laughter ripples*)

3rd mentor, Cindy: Get up np now. All of you, to the bathroom, wash, brush your teeth, clean your filthy hair. Don your work clothes. Do the things normal women always do. Unto an undefiled decent life Always remain true. All of you are here to be healed and to learn. All the respect, kindness, and accommodation mother earth affords, one must earn.

Gray: (*sighs, glances around, shrugs*) I suppose I'll be the first, upon noticing how rare all these slouches around me in this place are.

Ellie Mae: Well you should be, Gray, considering how active you were right here in the open last night, for all of us to see. My word, for crying out loud Here, you daughter of the red light dreary!

Gray: (*smiles, narrows face and eyes*) What on earth are you talking about, Ellie Mae? All kinds of long words just flop and fly from your mouth these days.

Ellie Mae: You know what I'm talking about! Don't play the fool with me, gal. I ain't your girly girl, sissy type, you huffing, puffing, pussy cat, you!

Gray: I don't know anything, woman. What on earth are you talking about? I mean, really, Ellie May Belle!

Ellie Mae: Must I spell it all out, here, in front of everybody? I'll speak the word around here in a minute, and hold back for none or nothing.

Gray: You are crazy, aren't you, Ellie Mae Belle? Four screw-up birds flew into that koo-koo nest there in your damn head.

Ellie Mae: Well then, (*huffs, both hands on hips*) it was nigh-bout midnight. This one certain swanky vixen sauntered in here on cat-like feet. Must I keep on going?

Gray: (*laughs*) Who? (*gazes around at everybody*) What are you speaking of, in regard to here?

Ellie Mae: Must I spell it all out for you to admit your fallacies in this place? Must I lay my great big salami right across your hand there for everybody in here to behold?

Gray: You really are off in the head, you know? I see why you wound up in a place such as this, gal. They'll wind up having you committed to a group home, an asylum, or somewhere, for life.

Ellie Mae: Does the name, Candy, ring a bell with you, girl among the girls? You peach to mouth pussy-cat, you?

Gray: (*feigns astonishment, gasps*) Ok now, that's enough. We don't want to hear any more. Quell the quail, seal the shark. Spare the roaring bear here. Keep it all under lock and key. Throw it away, we don't want any of it.

Breana: You must really be crazy, Ellie Mae. How could anything happen with us under a twenty four hour guard by these mentors?

Ellie Mae: Look at me now. I know you're as damn dumb as you both look, but Cindy Lou there falls asleep every night around eleven thirty when she pulls night duty. Several others always do around midnight or so. I'm telling you, all kinds of whacked out things go on around here in the after hours. You just don't know the extent of it all yet, evidently.

Gray: Well Ellie Mae, you're dreaming this time around, let me tell you. Another koo-koo has already flown into that head of yours to nest, I can clearly see.

Ellie Mae: You had better keep your damn mouth shut. I don't play with my words or with anything else, to put it bluntly. I hope you're not disappointed now, pussy cat.

Gray: Well, I'm going to the bathroom. I don't know what the rest of you will do. I'm not disappointed at all, if me saying so disappoints you, at least in concerns to a woodshed habit.

Ellie Mae: Yeah, and you had better. Be sure to brush your teeth and that tongue of yours very well. You and I both know how badly they need it.

Gray: (*huffs, arises from her cot, races out the door and around the wall*) I'll bet you secretly wish dearly somebody would do you, dog. I can see it in your eyes, with the way they glitter all around here like they do.

Breana: (*sighs, gazes around*) Wait a cotton-tailed minute. I'm missing something 'round here. Candy was with Quinn, I thought. I smell a rotten fish in the pile for certain.

Ellie Mae: That's the problem with you, Breanna, you thought. Haven't you figured anything out about this place yet? Nothing is as it seems around here. Everybody is engaged in one great big masquerade. The scholars are not what they seem. The mentors are not what they seem to be. The Teachers are not what they seem. The councilors are not what they seem. The medics are not what they seem to be. The school and facility itself isn't what it seems at all. This whole damn place is not even what it holds itself out to be. I mean, (*holds both hands out, palms up*) we're all here to make profit for this facility. You'll learn, and soon... And by the way, if you too smell something like dead fish around here, it's probably that rotten peach of Gray's, seeing how she never washes like she should. I feel sorry for her partner in debauchery and crime.

4th mentor, Daphne: (*appears at the door*) Well the others are away from the showers and the restrooms now. All of you need to get a move on. Let's go! Let's go! (*claps both hands*) Why do you people just lay there in them cots like you do? Get off your arses and onto your feet. Let's go! Let's go! Get a move on, now! Get out of the shade and into the heat. If one wants to hump and bump, they have to mount up and swing that

glorious pump! Let's go now, get a move on.

Leah: I feel like I'm in prison or something around here. We wanna rest right now. Why the pushy behavior and the crass attitude? I've only been here a week or so, but I can't stand it anywhere around in this place already!

4th mentor. Daphne: Let me be blunt and upfront with you. American society tried to be kind to all of you. Most of you hale from abroad throughout the impoverished war-torn eastern realm of planet earth. Your parents were butchered in the endless wars being fought over there, not to mention the latest big one in Ukraine, I think it is? All of your hams are being rescued from the flames, but none of you have sense enough to appreciate any of it.

Leah: (*shrugs*) Yeah, so what? What is this to the likes of you and your own around Here?

4th mentor, Daphne: What's it to me? (*points with right index finger toward her breast*)

Leah: What's it to any of you if our succulent tush buns are never filled by a great big bratwurst? So what if we'd rather find alternative ways to hit the high spot?

Girls around laying in cots: (*laughter ripples*)

4th mentor, Daphne: (*gasps*) It's not anything to me at all. I can tell you that much. I honestly don't give a happy damn if any of you swallow, take the bratwurst, bite the peach, or have your dirty rotten peaches bitten for that matter. But let's be honest with ourselves for a moment... American society felt empathy for you. Wealthy patrons took you into their homes.. How did all of you dogs show them thanks? One of you beats your adoptive mother's son nearly to death with a

Damn hammer. Another assaults your own adoptive mother with a knife, obviously trying to murder her. One of you even threatened to shoot up your entire school.

Stop and think about that for a moment... You are only twelve to seventeen years of age, for crying out loud here! *(points toward her chest with her right index finger)* We all are here to save you from your own pathetic selves.

Quinn: She's not lying about that now. Be honest with yourselves. Take a look at how bad the scars are all over Jo Zoe's arms. She's Od-ed four times on oxycontin and hundred proof whiskey, from what I have heard. Frequently she freezes up into trances, then passes out cold onto the floor. All of you are just as bad off. Look at your bruised, sliced, and picked over arms and bodies!

4th mentor, Daphne: So you all must listen well when we speak to you. Arise now from these cots. Go into that bathroom now while there's free space. Get cleaned up and ready to face the new day. Quit complaining, we have so much to do.

Breanna: But nobody in the world loves us, Daphne. We're all so alone. We feel such loss, where did we all go wrong?

4th mentor, Daphne: Somebody loves you somewhere because they sent you here. The Sunrise Shack ain't cheap honey, let me tell all of ya that much here and now.

Ellie Mae: About how much is it to be here? Nobody anywhere here ever tells us stuff like that.

4th mentor, Daphne: Try fifteen hundred dollars a damn day. That's right.., a damn day, for crying out loud! It takes a mighty good courtesan for hire to knead that kind a-dough. Most of you vixens act far too ghetto for people with that kind of bread to ever be

interested. But all of us are good people here on the Sunrise Plantation Estate. After you complete your treatment time here, we'll send ya off to a place that can sand away your course edges.

Red: That's not much. I've blown that much in one night before on new clothes, just so I could sit out front by the Boom-Boom House on Cowboy Street in Bangkok. (*chuckles*) I made back five times what I spent, however.

Quinn: Maybe not for you, being a famous movie star's daughter, and a famous worker over at the high dollar rancher's den out on Boom-Boom there.

4th mentor, Daphne: Do you realize this dollar amount adds up to eight hundred and twenty two thousand dollars over an eighteen month Period, the greatest possible maximum extent of your stay?

Quinn: (*gasps*) That's not far from a million smackers!

Ellie Mae: That means this place rakes in nearly twenty five million dollars a year. My word, my dear fallen angels!

4th mentor, Daphne: That's some fine mathematical calculations there Ellie May. So let's get to moving. All of you could one day be raking in that kind of dough, eh?

Ellie Mae: Plus all of the stuff we produce on the estate here, the food, the veggies, the horses we care for that are trained, then sold out.. I mean, think about that for a moment!

Quinn: Not to mention how they pander us out once we all are of age. Hell, this places reaps in a true-blue fortune!

Girls arise and line up single file, then proceed to the restroom. They walk inside one at a time. The third mentor follows, pausing at the door when the last one enters.

Gray: I hate these bathrooms. We have shower stalls, but no dividers and no damn privacy at all.

Ellie Mae: It's only us women round here. What's the worry?

Quinn: Yeah, quite a few of these dogs around here I see, are licking their chops.

Red: True, but you don't need to worry, these dogs know how we all use with our tampons still in. Far too many never wash or practice decent hygiene. That truth keeps any hungry dogs around here at bay. Somebody who didn't know better would swear all of us hailed from the ghetto wastelands of planet earth, to tell the truth, like ole Daphne said earlier.

Gray: Yeah, but some stiff long shank around the corner somewhere could care less. He's really hungry and raring to have a secret go. A stiff snake always yearns for a ripe and ready hole to crawl up into. Not to mention the sick dogs in heat around here who know well about all of your filthy peaches, but quite frankly could care less.

3rd mentor, Cindy: Yeah, but very few are around here, and the few who are, are carefully watched. I can tell all of you that much.

Gray: *(removes her clothes, eases something into her hand, tosses it over the toilet stall when Cindy isn't looking. She saunters over toward the shower)*

Quinn: *(On the toilet, picks up folded paper on the floor, opens it)*

Note: *Go to the last stall where the horses are. You know, where the horse, Cajun Queen is. I have something I would like to show you. Sincerely, The Gray fallen angel,*

Girls finish showering, place on robes provided by the facility, then exit toward the room. Stage lights gradually dim out. Ten minutes later lights snap back on. Girls

have on work clothes and are outside by the horse stables.

Enter 1st mentor-Christy, Quinn, Gray.

1st mentor, Christy: Alright ladies, all of you know your assigned stalls. You know our routine around here. First we feed and water the horses. Next we brush them very methodically and carefully. We wrap it all up by picking up their hooves like we showed you, and trimming their hooves if they need it with the curved knife we issued to you. Once you have completed this, you'll wrap it up by shoveling all ka ka outside of the stable, since today is Monday morning.

Gray: *(pauses up close beside Quinn)* Don't forget in a few, *(winks)* last stall by the woods on the backside. Who is your helper today?

Quinn: The new girl, Jo Zoe, or whatever her name is. I won't forget to visit you because she don't seem like she amounts to much anywhere. I'll tire of being around her.

Gray: *(smiles, moves her head to the left)* Just come on over when you can. We'll talk and whatever.

Quinn: *(walks into the stall. Tosses hay into the feeding trough)* Well here we are sis. It's me and you all over again. I just don't know what we'd do without one another.

Jo Zoe: *(Walks into the horse stall)* Hey, how many times have we met already?

Quinn: Five I think. Grab that brush and begin brushing her. We call her Ginger Bread.

Jo Zoe: *(brushing horse)* Because of her color, I'd presume? Are all of these horses female? I thought I heard somebody say so.

Quinn: I've not heard any talk of anything different. So.. how do ya feel about everything thus far?

Jo Zoe: Everybody here seems friendly enough. This is only my third week here.
(sighs)

Quinn: So, what's the matter? I can tell something doesn't settle down with you all the way.

Jo Zoe: Yeah, I mean, everything is smooth on the surface around here, but I sense an eerie, fearsome, foul current underneath.

Quinn: What do ya mean? *(laughs)* Everybody here is crazy, lady. That is why we're all here. All of us are whacked in the head. The workers here are even wanked out, for crying out loud. No fully sane person could tolerate a place such as this, in any capacity, as a worker, scholar, or patient. Hell, the owner and his ole lady are even off in the head, far as I am concerned.

Jo Zoe: Something around here is not quite right. I can't place my finger directly upon it, but something isn't flowing right around here. It's a feeling I get when I'm around the staff, around my fellow scholars, when I walk around this place and these grounds in general.

Quinn: Look, you finish curry combing out this horse. Brush her over good. I got things I must attend to. *(steps outside of the stall)*

Jo Zoe: Where ya headed?

Quinn: Last stall down next to the woods, where the Cajun Queen is, if anybody of importance ever asks. *(steps back around the wall)* Look, come on over when ya finish brushing.

Jo Zoe: Sure, why not?

Stage lights gradually dim, pause for three minutes, then brighten gradually. Zoe

exits.

Inside the stall of the Cajun Queen

Gray: (*curry combing the horse, glancing up, smiling*) I see you made it finally.

Quinn: All in due time. I had things I had to do, like you here. Where is yer Partner?

Gray: She's out and about. You know how Ellie Mae is.

Quinn: (*laughs*) I doubt she'll return.

Gray: I'm sure she's not. I don't have to second guess it.

Quinn: So, what's it? (*smiling*) Is something on here?

Gray: (*smiling, curry combing the horse*) This horse here is a true beauty. Don't you agree?

Quinn: That she is, and every bit as shiny black as the ace of spades.

Gray: (*rubs the fur with an opened right hand*) So full, and so muscular. The ripple sends heart racing chills all through my body, Quinn. My heart feels as though it might leap from deep inside my breast!

Quinn: Honestly, I don't know what to think, Gray. (*chuckles*) What should I make of it?

Gray: You try it. Here go, now, try it!

Quinn: No, no, no, I only came here to talk.

Gray: Go ahead, rub the horse with your hand, like I did.

Quinn: (*places her opened right palm upon the horse's thigh*) I don't know how.

Gray: You're doing well with it. Talk to the horse in cooing language. Tell the horse how firm and muscular it feels.

Quinn: O.K. (*rubs the horse, laughs*) I like the way you feel, big girl. You do something to me when I touch you like this. (*glances back at Gray*) I'm not sure I'm so good at this, Gray.

Gray: (*gasps, struggling to breath*) Oh, you're so perfect, big girl. If you only knew.

Quinn: (*glances back, sneers*) What's wrong with you? Something is definitely wrong with you. (*backs away*) You do the horse thing here. I don't want to Anymore.

Gray: Tell me, what do you think about this horse, Quinn?

Quinn: This horse is beautiful. (*glances the horse all over, gasps suddenly*) My word dolly. Good golly Molly Rae! Why do they call this horse The Cajun Queen? I most certainly don't see any reason for such a name.

Gray: I don't know, but there is a reason. (*pause, breathes heavily, leans over toward Quinn*) Let me ask you something in sincere earnest.

Quinn: Sure Gray, (*smiles*) ask me anything.

Gray: Have you ever read the story of Pasiphae, and king Minos?

Quinn: I have no idea, to be honest.

Sudden voice behind them at the stall entrance: I have!

Gray and Quinn snap around

Quinn: My word, Jo Zoe, why did you scare us both so, like that?

Jo Zoe: (*Walks up toward the horse and the two girls. Her face is dark and trance like*) I've been watching both of you the entire time. Yes this splendid horse is exhilarating, to both look at and touch. Pasipahe was the wife of King Minos. King Minos prayed to the god, Poseidon, and asked for a snow white bull as a sign of the god's favor. He was supposed to sacrifice the bull to Poseidon, but the bull was so beautiful he decided to keep him as his own.

Quinn: That's a nice story. So what happened next?

Jo Zoe: The god, Poseidon, punished King Minos by causing his wife, Pasiphae, to fall in love with the bull.

Quinn: Did she?

Jo Zoe: Oh yes, (*smiles*) and in every way imaginable.

Quinn: (*commences breathing heavily*) I sense a weighty flow hanging in the air
About this space here.

Gray: The magnetism is utterly irresistible.

Jo Zoe: I must agree. I felt it from the moment I walked up.

Gray: I come down here to rub this horse down and admire his outstanding features all the time. (*pauses, heavy breathing*) I don't know how much longer I can withhold. Would you two join in with me?

Quinn: (*shrugs*) Sure, why not? I need a new thrill.

Jo Zoe: (*smiles*) I'm in with it. I could then live a long held Greek mythological fantasy of mine.

Gray: Allow great Poseidon's ancient spell to be upon us all here at this very moment.

Quinn, Gray, Jo Zoe, Christy, Cindy, Daphne, Breanna, Elle Mae, Leah, Rachel, Red, exit.

Stage lights gradually fade out

Scene 2

Girls line up by the tool shed.

Enter 1st mentor-Christy, Chole, Isa

1st mentor, Christy: Get your grubbing hoes. There is a row for each person. What are the three sisters? Does anybody here remember? This information is important.

Chloe: *(smiles)* The three sisters are corn, beans, and squash.

1st mentor, Christy: That's right Chloe. Now does anybody recall what the secondary ladies of the field are? These are the money makers.

Isa: Those would be the Jerusalem artichoke, the sweet potatoes, and the citron Melons. Pumpkins and watermelons also are included in this account.

1st mentor, Christy: That's right Isa. This means there is a patch and a row for each person in this facility. Everybody needs to find one and start grubbing out the grass and weeds. Lets all get on it now!

Girls pick up their tools at the shed in single file, then walk out to the huge garden patch one at a time.

Enter Bea, second mentor-Rachel

Bea: Give me that old style of grubbing hoe there across the counter, woman.

2nd mentor, Rachel: Coming right to you (*grabs hoe from rack*) Must be your favorite hoe for sho, eh?

Bea: (*smiles*) Her warden bears a much more developed handle, seriously.

2nd mentor, Rachel: Be nice now. We're in a public place. Night things shall retain All potential private scenes.

Bea: Well my pretty, honey you had no fears three nights ago. I mean, you were a real energizer bunny, let me tell you!

2nd mentor, Rachel: Don't you dare jeopardize my position. I mean it! Stop talking like that out here.

Bea: Me? (*gasps, places opened palm on breast*) Pray tell woman, why any forbearance now? Where lies your true nature?

2nd mentor, Rachel: My private self and my public self are two separate entities. I want to maintain my position as such. With us in our positions, intimate revelations would be serious business, for myself and many others around here.

Bea: A serpent speaks with a forked tongue. Yet, let us recollect where it beguiled Eve, if my Sunday school memory from here serves me well.

2nd mentor, Rachel: And a bunny rabbit has a great big appetite. But this trick-zie buck knows which one's she'll gratify from now on.

Bea: (*angry expression*) You are definitely not faithful. I detect your deceitful nature in your very mannerism.

2nd mentor, Rachel: Look at me, girly girl. One's personal life was meant to

remain behind closed doors, or in private corners. You violated me by broadcasting intimate secrets all across the The Sunrise Plantation and its whole sick, gossiping, horn wearing estate.

Bea: Me, broadcasting secrets...? Awe, come on woman. You and the two phillies thought you were so sly, easing out the house window and slinking back down to the horse stables. Oh, let me tell you, you had stacked the hay bales just right, creating a leprechaun imp's perfect covert king-size canopy bed. Right?

2nd mentor. Rachel: (*gasps*) Do you need extra time today with your therapist? What about additional med supplies? We can arrange for this following group session today.

Bea: Don't you dare play games with me. (*hands on both hips*) You listen to me, woman, and listen clearly. (*leans forward, smiles*) You never knew you and your two little vixens were being followed, did you? And me, oh my, the fine display you did make, honey. Two different sets of eyes beheld all of it in every ounce of its splendidly debauched glory.

2nd mentor, Rachel: (*gasps*) No, they did not dare!

Bea: But that is not what is so upsetting in this story, Rachel. You were in a dedicated relationship already. How do you think it made Mia feel?

2nd mentor, Rachel: Shut up to me. I don't want to hear any more! Besides, myself nor anybody else believes a single word you are saying. The medic needs to issue you some more meds soon, I think.

Bea: I can prove what I am saying. The two witnesses saw you in action with that new toy you brought. Not to mention the risque activities you were engaging in as you were making use of this new toy. I mean, when Mia was told about it, she said she never knew you to be such a depraved character when carried away in the sheets, and she went with you for seven months. I think she told us. But she did say that she gave you credit for knowing how to squeeze the

juice from a grape and she wasn't astonished in the least bit, only severely hurt.

2nd mentor, Rachel: Enough of this talk. You have work to do, so go to it. You are holding others up in the line here.

Bea: Fine, we'll talk later on. *(snatches up the hoe and walks on)*

2nd mentor, Rachel: Next person up!

Stage lights dim. 2nd mentor: Rachel, Bea, exit. Ten minutes later stage lights gradually brighten. Girls congregate in front of the tool room in the direction of the field.

Out in the expansive garden

1st mentor, Christy: All I want to see are booty holes and elbows, you saucy dogs in heat! We have work to do here on the Sunrise Plantation Estate. All of you had better get that fact into your whacked li'le heads right now, from the get go. Then we must shower up and eat. You know the routine around here. Nobody gives anybody anything in this world. All of you must learn to work for what you get. Let's move it! Move it! Move it! Get to work now, or get three days and nights in solitary confinement. All of life's pleasures come with a price paid in sweat, blood, and pain. In the end, when all is said and done, when labor causes one to sweat and bleed, work makes you free!

Each girl selects an individual row of vegetables and commences hoeing out the weeds, grass, and breaking up the soil surrounding the individual plants.

Enter Isa, Quinn

Isa: These beets and turnips are my favorite patchy rows to hoe.

Quinn: Get them well. The greens will be breaking ground soon. I see you bending way down to get at them. I personally prefer these zucchini squash plants.

Isa: When the leaves grow big enough, they will shade out the grass, you know. My work will be much less in the end. Besides that, zucchini squash will put out a truckload a week near-bout.

Quinn: I feel some heat 'round here. What's yer take on things, Isa?

Isa: You know, I go along and kind of mind my own business. You know how I am, Woman. Fighting against the flow anywhere is futile, I've found.

Quinn: You're bothered by something. Them arms ain't sliced all up for nuttin, Honey!

Isa: Such is my take. There is some hot sauce a-flowin' in this place, let me tell ya. There is some serious smooch going on between Chrisy and Bea, but such a thing is a big cat those who know tremble at letting loose from the bag.

Quinn: Yeah, yeah, yeah! I know that much. Everybody 'round here has some smooch going on with somebody. Toss some meat at me here. Am I crazy, or what?

Isa: If I give ya the low down, what's in it for me?

Quinn: What's your fetish? I can hook you up right.

Isa: (*smiles, chuckles*) I have my kicks and my pleasures, be they what they may. A sweet little lifesaver loves being relished by a red hot tongue. Problem is, this Lily really relishes a heavy buzz while it's happening.

Quinn: Well I tell ya what... Lifesavers finding pleasure around here is no problem. But I can also tell you, I owe Sherri, the medic, a kind succulent favor, and I can fetch you a good muscle relaxer to go with it, if your

information is valuable enough to court that kind of return.

Isa: Listen, and you listen well to what I have to say. Honey, I don't go 'round repeating gossip, so you had better listen closely the first time. This is where the wheel commences a-rolling. The second mentor, Rachel, has a smooch going on with Bea. There is a problem with that, however. Rachel also has a thing going on with Mia as well.

Quinn: Yeah, I anticipated that much. So be it? So what doo-doo floats in the mix?

Isa: Problem is Bea knew nothing of it until recently, and she's mighty upset about the jilt.

Quinn: I noticed she was wearing a pink brass wire ring the other day, and so was Rachel at the Time. Pink is Rachel's personal color. It's a battle around here to the death if anybody else claims that color, unless she has a smooch going with Rachel.

Isa: Well, is this story getting saucy enough for justifying my pleasant desserts?

Quinn: I'm game, and you're in, woman. Just gimme me the lowdown and keep on talkin'.

Isa: Now, we made our promise. If you are not in and fail to come through on your part, you'll find your cute little self at the top of my hitlist, and I have one hell of a butch hitman, let me tell ya.

Quinn: (*swallows hard*) The terror of The Sunrise Plantation Estate, I presume.

Isa: Sure, but you come through and there is no problem, so here we go. So Rachel turns a trick for Christy, who picks her up a little tantalizing buzz toy. I mean, the kind that can really squeeze the juice out of a grape that all of these dogs 'round here dream about all of the time.

Quinn: Christy is kind of quiet, but I saw the devil there in her eyes, for sure.

Isa: Last full moon, Racheal, Leah, and Meg, crept out when Christy fell asleep on the job at midnight, like she always does. They ease on down to the forth horse stable where She Devil is kept.

Quinn: Yeah, there was a nice hay bale bed made up down there on the sly by somebody, I noticed.

Isa: Well, let's just say each one had a turn, one using the toy on one side, and the other giving out pleasant favors to the hungry lifesaver always in need. I heard the hay was covered in joy juice, gal!

Quinn: My word! (*sighs loudly*) I bet.. I can only fathom the extent of that pleasure at the moment.

Isa: Well, in the midst of their ecstasy, two more stained vixens took notice, easing out behind them. Each of the two taking their own pleasure in watching these steamy occurrences.

Quinn: Who? I know at least a little trick betwixt the two occurred.

Isa: That's my little secret for the time being, but yeah, you can bank on the trick.

Quinn: So, what became of it? (*shrugs*) Why does it even matter?

Isa: Well, they go back and inform Bea, and she is really upset. I mean, she's crazy upset about it. I think some major trouble looms from this scenario, so keep your eyes open. Most importantly, watch your back around here.

Quinn: Give me a hint.

Isa: Leah has a thing going with one of these lonely watchers in the rye. The other is an employee here, who makes and takes a pleasant cut with every opportunity the general social situation affords.

Quinn: My word, Leah goes with everybody. My general opinion is that she looks and acts like she swings some serious salami.

Isa: But she's possessive and relatively stable when she's truly serious. Think about it. If you need help figuring it all out, let me know, and maybe we can work something out after you pay me what you already owe.

Quinn: Thanks for the word, and I'll definitely keep an eye and an ear open and Out.

Isa: It's nearly time for breakfast, but before we exit I want to ask you one Question. (*winks*) Does Gray Candy ring a bell with you?

Quinn: No, what of it?

Isa: Well the mentor guard on duty was Cindy Lou.

Quinn: Not really. I'm still fuzzy on specific details.

Isa: Must I clarify here? The backdoor butch was Daphne. (*sighs deeply*) And you are so right. Sherri, the medic lady with the long blond hair, certainly wants her turn at a few kind favors. But beware, feelings are getting stomped on hard around here, and The Sunrise Plantation Estate's terror can be purchased rather inexpensively. I hear Sherri is ultra-depraved in its most glorious state of being. You really messed up going into debt with her. After she tests your skill level, she'll probably hire you out for payment to all the dogs and the pussy cats in need, on your debt.

Quinn: Long as she pays in full, I'll take the stroke as it comes. I never claimed to be a bad little boy, Isa. Naw, on the contrary.. I'm a really good girl's little girl, especially when the price sets me right. Spank me with loving licks, and I'll never be any way but right, I promise. Pat my head and I'll go exactly where I'm led, especially when a little backdoor pleasure is desired instead.

1st mentor, Christy, Isa, Quinn, exit. Stage lights dim out

Scene 3

Back in the bathhouse

Enter 3rd mentor-Cindy, Ellie Mae, Candy

3rd mentor, Cindy: Alright, we have nine shower stalls. Each of you little fallen angels are going to wash up before we make our way into the mess hall. Wash them rotten peaches up well, and them filthy boots. No self respecting tigress anywhere 'll ever dare to eat with you otherwise.

Ellie Mae: You're not supposed to be talking to us like that. There are rules against everything happening around here. None of this stuff is supposed to be.

3rd mentor, Cindy: Listen you little ginger-knob peach chomper. The only rules here are mine! I make the rules when its only me, but I also get all assigned duties completed, in case you haven't noticed. You do what you are told and you'll be alright.

Ellie Mae: I'm nobody's fig newton. Do you have me straight? You may be able to lay down and eat with most of these dogs and they'll walk the other way in lieu of your antics, but I'm not indebted to you or anybody 'round here. When I find the right people, I tell it like it is, should the need arise, and fear not.

3rd mentor, Cindy: My bell ringer needs to pay you a visit shrew. I can see that much right now.

Ellie Mae: And one more thing we gotta get straight on... I can't smoke a peach, but I'm one hell of a good pipe smoker, honey. Besides that, smoking Great big long pipes give me a good head rush. I'm not interested in

any peach, to tell the truth.

3rd mentor, Cindy: You still got to obey the house rules. You'll still pay your dues, by the way. So don't make any debts. Let me tell you something.. One day or night you'll be naked as you are right now, down on all fours, barking and glossing whoever however I command, like the little ginger headed puppy dog you are. You don't believe me? Well just dare to try me, or any of my alliances.

Ellie Mae: Don't give me any garbage! That's all I have to say. You're mangling with the wrong tigress in this place. Nobody in here has ever seen the likes of me!

3rd mentor, Cindy: Get in that shower now, while there is an open place. You'll keep your mouth shut around here as well. What happens on The Sunrise Plantation Estate, remains on The Sunrise Plantation Estate, always and forevermore. Do all of you scramble-dolls have that much straight?

All the girls in the bath house: Yes, lovely peach.

3rd mentor, Cindy: (*walks up behind Ellie Mae as she showers*) Did you get that? You will do what you are told around here, or else. The law is just that easy to follow. All of us are the best thing that has ever happened to the likes of people such as yourself. We have your entire life career cut out for you. Some of you will grow up to be big time dance stars. Others will find a place in the Movie industry. Some will do both. Some few might independently freelance. All of us must learn our own way and pay our dues around here as we go, and honey, life ain't easy. So learn that lesson now.

Ellie Mae: I have my own line, so quit bothering me. I ain't your deuce bag, or anybody else's.

Candy: (*in the open shower next to Ellie Mae*) I see some big time-bank to be made around here.

3rd mentor, Cindy: (*walks up closely behind her*) What's cooking in the oven?
Give me a slice.

Candy: I know some gals in need of cotton. I don't mind a little cotton here and there myself, but I love a good favor when I can get it.

3rd mentor, Cindy: What about giving favors? How are you with that?

Candy: I have no hesitation, honey. Between the both of us, it's just that my end of it has to be good enough.

3rd mentor, Cindy: How are you with customer satisfaction, though?

Candy: Nothing less than the very best. I take great pleasure in what I do.

3rd mentor, Cindy: Well I have an assignment for you. Are you game?

Candy: I'm game. I'm here, I'm over there, I'm all over.

3rd mentor, Cindy: Your assignment is to keep me abreast of what Sherri, the medic is doing around here. With her is where the real bank is. These little peaches around here can't do anything but play stinky finger and trade whatever originates from Sherri or another medic. I want a bead on the real gold, personally.

Candy: (*smiles as she bathes*) What's in for me? I can fetch you any of that info you want, but where is my take?

3rd mentor, Cindy: Look, I know you do the butch, do her without hesitation, and do her well.

Candy: So what's it? (*shrugs*) Such a thing is a routine play around here, in the proper circles.

3rd mentor, Cindy: (*whispers, moves in closely*) What if I can fetch you a great big stiff shank? No less than a gifted long shank, ripe, ready, up and Arching magnificently?

Candy: (*laughs*) Really dead fish? I get that already, whenever I want it.

3rd mentor, Cindy: (*astonished, gasps*) How is it? What name is on the handle?

Candy: If you pay me and Jo Zoe favors, mixed in with a bit of cotton or dust, you can play stick finger while you sit up and watch us two and one more in Action. Maybe you could borrow the toy and have a hit of pink M & Ms to go with it. Are you in with us?

3rd mentor, Cindy: What's the name on the shank handle?

Candy: (*smiles*) The Cajun Queen..

3rd mentor, Cindy: What? My word, you crazy bean flicker! But I don't understand?

Candy: It's not for you to understand at this moment. Question is, are you in with me, or not?

3rd mentor, Cindy: Look, I can't connect the dots in what you are telling me, but what about my proposal to you? Maybe we'll lay your proposal on a shelf for now.

Candy: OK...(shrugs) I'm game. What's my assignment?

3rd mentor, Cindy: I wanna know everything you can find on Sherri. I want to know what she serves out, what kind of wings she has in that office, who her clientele is, what each one's kick is. Can you

fetch such a letter for li'le ole me?

Candy: So what's my take, again?

3rd mentor, Cindy: I got the cotton and pink mickeys. Fetching you dust is not a big problem.

Candy: So what's the shank's handle?

3rd mentor, Cindy: The name is Regeana, but she is called Reggi by her good buddies..

Candy: That's not a shank! How dare you dog me like that, shrew!

3rd mentor, Cindy: (*chuckles*) So little do you know. Ole Reggi is a monster shank, at full attention always, but nobody realizes this. He certainly doesn't look like one.

Candy: This place is highly restricted. Where 's the sneak?

3rd mentor, Cindy: Well, three days from now we have some electrical work that needs doing 'round here. Well guess who the electrician is doing it? We're so far out there it's almost no competition for Reggi. Of course, this job is in the bag. Reggi has a wonderful reputation for doing extraordinary electrical work, no matter what one's opinions might be otherwise. His big logo and number is the only one listed for our area and most of Twanna County here.

Candy: So how do you know this she-male, Reggi, 'll be game?

3rd mentor, Cindy: Oh, word gets out and about, honey. Ole Reggi has two more dogs in heat here to service on that same day. The trick 'll be easy and pain free to roll. Much of his/her work is inside the bathrooms and the tool rooms. A few of the horse stalls need

their lights rewired, and such. The play 'll unfold inside those places. No watching eyes on the ceilings or on the walls there, eh?

Candy: I tell you what, I'm in with it, but if the shank, the M&Ms, or the dust doesn't come through, you'll be indebted to me. I have a favor I need done that has nothing to do with anything in terms of trade that we've discussed. Do we have an understanding?

3rd mentor, Cindy: (*Smiles*) It's on baby doll, like nice succulent lollipops, sweet lips on a real beautiful face, and long pleasant songs.

Stage lights gradually dim out. Candy, 3rd mentor, Ellie Mae exit.

Scene 4

Inside the mess-hall located in the academy building.

Girls walking in single file

Enter forth mentor, Dakota, Gray

4th mentor, Daphne: You calla-lilies single file in here to the mess-bar. You know the well worn routine by now. Get your trays, your plastic silverware, your plastic plates and cups. Your choice of drink is water, kool aid or pink lemonade. Such is a time for good luck!

Dakota: What are we having today? Hmm, looks like bacon, lettuce, and tomato sandwiches.

Gray: For desert we have bananas, tangerine, and peach.

Dakota: We have beans and like tortillas sometimes. With chips and salsa the two combined are nice. Cream cheese melts well with everything, for sure.

Breanna: I enjoy it when we have the thick slices of multi-hued layered cake for Desert.

Gray: I get a kick from this food. It kind of gives me a special energy. I have no words for reasons why it must work its magic as it does.

Quinn: (*smiles, licks lips*) I enjoy the food they serve here as well. A little Ace to go along with the pleasant food might be a nice addition to my multi-hued cake slice. Reckon you could make it happen for me, Dakota?

Dakota: Leave me out of your foolish games bitch! I want no part of it. Ace deserves no heart pains.

Quinn: I'm nobody's toy girl, unless I want it to be that way. Don't you dare muck me around, fickle dog.

Dakota: You were tagged. Have you casually forgotten? All of these sweet lolly holes have been plugged and party buzzed already, far too many times over..., and you dare to call me a fickle dog! How dare you?

Quinn: Forgotten? Where are you from? Lick my cherry lolly, puppy dog.

Dakota: You tossed yer little candy tag aside, I can see already sis? You bear no loyalty whatsoever. My true question to you is are you worthy of loyalty!

Quinn: Shut up to me, toy girl! Lick my violet lolly hole, wing queen!

Dakota: Oh, wouldn't you wish for it? You sick little puddin' pie!

Quinn: Yeah, you wish I would wish for it, don't you, you dirty little golden star?

Dakota: You're not in with it, doggie dog!

Quinn: What language do you speak, big butch tramp?

Dakota: Be truthful for a moment. You were tagged without duress, and you know it.

Dakota and Quinn fill their plates, take their seats

Quinn: I'm no butch's ho, tramp. Don't you dare pester me.

Dakota: Well there's yer Candy master, swinging a great big twenty four for shore! Why don't we ask her?

Quinn: (*gasps*) You wouldn't dare do such a thing here, you low life gutter tramp.

Dakota: Hey, Candy girl, hey! Come here with the latest good news, and report to the slammer now!

Candy: (*while in her seat*) Yeah, sweet cheeks, what's it? Sweet words for an invitation to supper? Maybe with a nice stranger to join in? Fill me in smoothly all the way to the luscious rim, darlin'!

Dakota: Look what the latest hungry tigress drug up and left to rot around here! (*points toward Quinn*)

Candy: What? Where is the booty ring hanging round her neck?

Dakota: Come here! You gotta see it to believe it.

Candy: (*arises, walks from her table across the lunch room to Dakota's table*) What's it? A new lollypop queen or a saint of good peaches?

Dakota: Look! (*points at Quinn*) She just sat here and told me she wanted a little Ace to go with her multi-hued layer cake. What do you feel about that?

Candy: *(walks over to Quinn)* You gross dog! You little two timing wing-queen.
(assaults Quinn, slapping her across the face) You grunge peach! I hate
you from the bottom of my heart! *(weeps bitterly)*

Dakota: Wait a butt-sucking minute here. You're not self employed here, honey.
Let me do my job. That's what I am well paid to do! *(shoves Candy away
and assaults Quinn with big manlike fists)*

*Quinn falls to the floor. Blood soon covers the table and puddles onto the floor.
Dakota and Candy are on top of her, beating with their fists and kicking her.*

1st mentor, Christy: *(races over to the fight scene)* Oh my gosh! Here we go again.
What is it this time, another jilted smooch? Quinn should have
four or five butt rings around her neck, far as I'm concerned!

4th mentor, Daphne: *(racing over to the fight scene)* This one definitely looks bad,
real damn bad let me tell ya. There's blood all over
everything. Watch yourselves. Don't get any on ya. You don't
know what kind of wanked out disease lies in the waiting.

*Both mentors grab Dakota and Candy, pulling them away. Quinn lies motionless
on the floor in a pool of blood.*

3rd mentor, Cindy: *(places Candy in a rear arm lock, pulls her back, then falls to
the floor, rolling over and pinning her down)*

1st mentor, Christy: *(Places Dakota in a rear arm lock, pulls her back, then falls to
the floor, rolling over and pinning her down)*

Dakota: *(gasping for breath)* You sluts and bitches, all of you! I hate you all. May
all of you find yourselves roasting in the fires of hell! You just wait. I'll
call somebody and have a lawyer in here so damn fast. You just wait! This
place has had it when I am finished with it.

1st mentor, Christy: You shut your mouth or I'll have you in solitary for week,
living on nothin' but bread and water! You hear me?

Dakota: *(sobbing)* I hear you, but you just wait. I'll cram my peach in that bitches
mouth so hard I'll choke her to death.

Candy: *(sobbing)* And I'll be pegging the sorry va-jay hard at the same time until
she dies!

3rd mentor, Cindy: Both of you shut your mouths, or we'll silence you both for
at least a week. *(glances over at Christy)* Quinn is out cold on
the floor. We have to get her into the medic's office, and
quickly. Daphne, you and Rachel pick her up and carry her on.

*Quinn is picked up. Lights gradually dim out. 1st mentor-Christy, 2nd
mentor-Rachel, 3rd mentor-Cindy, Quinn, Dakota, Candy, 4th mentor-Daphne,
Grey, exit.*

Scene 5

*In a back room of the academic building is the medic office. Three nurses share the
space. Two of the nurses are also councilors. Sherri is the chief nurse and medic.*

Enter Sherri, Darcie, Morgan, and Earl

Sherri: There is so much to do around here, organizing these meds, getting orders
lined up. It will be you two working the office, lining up the doses and
taking calls, while I do the field work of delivering and verifying calls.

Darcie: We all have our days cut out for us around here. *(grabs pills, inspects
label)* We must do what we have to do.

Morgan: Where ya headed out to now, Sherri?

Sherri: Group C over in The Sunrise Shack.

Morgan: Well the scholars are in the academic building here, at this present time.

Sherri: Not the ones I'm going to visit.

Morgan: Hmm, what's it now? What kind of dog do we hold in her pen?

Sherri: I'm astonished that you don't know.

Morgan: (*gasps*) Why on earth should I? Much goes on around here I'm not aware Of.

Sherri: Well I can't imagine why one would not ask questions around here. We have a serious casualty laying down now in the sick room. We're debating and evaluating as to whether or not she'll be delivered to the Raymond Jerry Reynolds hospital over in Scurlock there.

Morgan: (*gasps, places hands on hip*) Why would the perpetrators not be in the academic building?

Earl: (*steps around the corner through the opened door of the medic room*)
Hmm, we have much going on around here. I see a great stir. What's it, my children?

Morgan: Well Miss busy body there says she's on a special delivery. It seems she's on a special mission over at the SS dorm to deliver meds and do a little sleuth work seeking to unravel the shall we say, mysterious circumstances of our innocent victim lying in the sick room here.

Earl: (*smiles, glances toward Sherri*) Yes, you could say she's our little go getter there. She unwraps what nobody else can around here, when we need such a thing. She's a true Sherlock Holmes donning a medical cloak for sure.

Morgan: Are you so sure she's up to this job, however?

Earl: She's always come through in the past. I don't see any reason she'll not do so now.

Morgan: A fox needs at least a good eye up in the sky, when the farmer is crazy enough to lead her inside the henhouse.

Morgan exits

Earl: Don't let this get to you. I know the deal. All's going to be well. You do what you must do. (*winks*) I have your back. Let them take their shots, eh?

Sherri: (*grabs the pills from Darcie*) Time's a-wastin. I must go. Much to do and little time to mull about anything. A hardline action program must always support deliberated plans. Now is that time.

Earl: Drop me a note or stop by my office, if you can when you complete your Assignment. (*winks*)

Sherri: I'll do so if my own sanity prevails inside this henhouse. Sometimes these hens act like the ones my father raised when they had been eating moonseed. I always felt that the phrase looney derived from that reality upon being noticed by somebody important in the past.

Earl: It's a royal mucked up mess, but you get the low down on things. Pay the piper his dues, then drop the dime with me in my office when the low-down is done. I am dying to know specifically into whose face the doo-doo covered end of the staff of authority needs to be shoved.

Sherri: It's all in a day around here. I've lived two days already and it's not even lunch time yet.

Earl: It's always a day and a night around here, all rolled up into a nice great big fat one.

Sherri, Earl, Darcie, exit
Stage lights gradually fade out

Ten minutes later at The Sunrise Shack

Enter Sherri

Sherri: *(in room 3)* I have meds for Gabby here, but I have a question for all of you. Let's be brutally honest around here now gals. Give me the real spill. I need to know from where the juice flies, since I am the one dealing with the results.

Ellie Mae: I'll be blunt and up front then, cause I don't give a damn anymore. I know what the play around here is and what went down with that.

Sherri: *(takes a notepad and a pen from the pocket in her medical jacket)* Start talking now. I'm all ears, and I'm ripe and ready.

Ellie Mae: You thought that went down on the spur of the moment, didn't you dog?

Hanna: Don't you dare call our cake and candy a dog! You should be respectful, or you'll see some doggie days. I can tell you that much!

Ellie Mae: *(turns toward Sherri)* Could we step outside?

Sherri: Sure, come along. *(they both step outside The Sunrise Shack into the blossoming flower yard)*

Ellie Mae: Look, as I was saying, that was no random event. It was a direct hit, ordered and organized. I promise you that much.

Sherri: Who was the hitman?

Ellie Mae: That's confidential information.

Sherri: Alright then, who hired her out?

Ellie Mae: Those files are sealed tightly.., for now.

Sherri: What shall it take to open them? I need the nut to shed from its thick hull.

Ellie Mae: Dakota desperately wants a run around the world with you. She/he, called you a botox callipygian, I think was the phrase. It really turns her On. She has visions of debauched possibilities with you and your body, dancing in her head almost every night.

Sherri: What? (*gasps*) That's asking much for this simple fulfillment! I'm not sole, hardcore, Ellie Mae. I'm ambidextrous you know, and simultaneous when possible.

Ellie Mae: Well that's life, (*chuckles*) isn't it? I don't care how you get your kicks. It's you wanting information from me, not the other way around. I don't need anything.

Sherri: Alright, (*gasps, shakes her head*) alright then. Give me what I'm after, and do it ASAP.

Ellie Mae: (*smiles, gasps*) The hitman was Candy girl.

Sherri: Who hired her out to do the job?

Ellie Mae: Throw me some more sugar. (*holds out her right hand*) More sugar here on the hand, honey.

Sherri: What on earth are you asking for now? (*gasps*) What's with you anyway crazy girl?

Ellie Mae: I am desperate for a little Apache slap on the soup. I want it strong enough to show its tracks.

Sherri: I can slap you right now as we speak, but a treble slap 'll send you and anybody else directly into the stone-yard.

Ellie Mae: Look woman, either you give me what I want, or throw in a strapping peg with Dakota and let me get my kicks watching the two of you. I want permission to bring a good friend in for the show too.

Sherri: You want the moon and the stars on a silver platter, don't you?

Ellie Mae: That's right, and nothing less, and don't you dare ever forget that.

Sherri: Ok, you win, here! *(reaches into her white coat pocket with her right hand, slaps three pills into Ellie May's right hand)* If you lead me astray, I'm coming for your head, dog, as you say.

Ellie Mae: Well I'm already eating with the best, when I please. *(smiles)* You'll have to wait your turn to burn in the churn with me.

Sherri: No, I'm serious, I'll have it in for you big time, and honey I don't play, just in case you don't know that. You'll be swallowing light poles and letting yourself get hit in the back door by a monstrosity stick, should you dare to double cross me.

Ellie Mae: It's the mentor, Cindy, for your information. You can't trust her no farther than you can see. She'll turn a dime as fast as you can look at her.

Sherri: She's twenty years old. What would possess her to do such a thing?

Ellie Mae: She's pissed cause Gray had a smooch going on with Candy, but Gray was also in a major serious heavy smooch with Quinn. Quinn and Cindy are in an open smooch situation.

Sherri: What the hell is that?

Ellie Mae: They have an open relationship.

Sherri: So what's the problem?

Ellie Mae: Cindy was in a deep smooch with Candy girl. Quinn had been working on Candy hard behind her back. Candy is the prized piece of meat around this place, honey. You know that, don't you?

Sherri: Why didn't she bump Gray?

Ellie Mae: Grey has such a smooth attitude and can always slide out of sticky situations, whereas Quinn has a major attitude, as I know you already know.

Sherri: Well, thanks for the tips. I'll bear it all in mind here.

Ellie Mae: No, thank you, and I will not forget. But don't you dare neglect payment on your debts.

Sherri: Never have I, and never will.

Sherri, Ellie Mae, Hanna, exit, curtains fall

Act 2

Scene 1

Enter Heidi, Earl, 3rd mentor-Cindy, policeman, Regi

Heidi: *(inside the rear office room behind desk)* Too many calls and I'm not answering any of them. Next thing we know we 'll have the news media

here. I've been back and forth to court three times in the past six months already.

Earl: (*at the door*) In regard to what? I've lost track of all the garbage being tossed around here, frankly.

Heidi: In regard to the facility here.

Earl: Do you mean the three lawsuits we recently endured?

Heidi: That, and our stirring business in general.

Earl: Well that information is off limits to anybody but our own selection.

Heidi: I have a keen eye and mind out on the matter.

Earl: You watch your step. It's a true jungle out there.

Heidi: I carefully examine where each foot falls. I don't need to second guess Anything. I know all about the snakes in the grass, let me tell ya.

Earl: It's my sincere hope that you're watching in the proper places.

Heidi: Oh, it takes money to run a business, and I'm carefully watching every dime. You just hold your end of the good pipe up.

Earl: Well, I need to run a few errands over in Scurlock. The maintenance people need some paint and some construction material, and I need to swing by the lawyer's office.

Heidi: Don't waste time fretting over anything. (*smiles*) I have everything under Control. I'll be where the owl sits in the attic office when I'm not stirring around on the ground here, sleuthing out answers.

Earl: I wont a bit. If I don't make it back here this evening, then I'll catch you on

a fast one back at the house.

Heidi: See you there!

Earl exits

Enter Regi through the front door

Front secretary: May I help you?

Reggi: I'm the electrician on a duty assignment for today.

Front secretary: Hmm, the famous gifted electrician! *(smiles broadly)* I've heard so much about you Lately.

Reggi: I don't know about famous, but could you tell me where I might find Miss Heidi Clemm?

Front secretary: I sure can. She's right down the hall there, first door on the left from the counter here.

Reggi: Thanks. *(walks on, enters Heidi's office)* Knock Knock!

Heidi: *(glances up from her desk)* Oh, hello! Fancy you so soon.

Reggi: Hello Miss Clemm, I'm Reggi, the electrician. I'm ripe and ready for duty.

Heidi: Yes, I've been anticipating your arrival. How about stepping inside and closing that door behind when you do.

Reggi: Sure. *(closes door, walks up, takes a seat in front of desk)*

Heidi: Look, I have quite a bit of work needing to be completed around here. Most of it is in the bathrooms and the tool rooms, at least for today. I see you have your tool bag handy.

Reggi: Yes, based on what you told me I already have most of what I anticipate I need to complete the job inside this bag here. Should anything else arrive, then I'll simply make my way back out to the van there.

Heidi: (*sighs*) I know you have much to do to complete what I've asked, but I need to speak with you in earnest about something.

Reggi: (*shrugs*) Sure, go ahead. I've heard it all in my day.

Heidi: We're a struggling company. I don't know if you've been watching the news, but we've been hit by lawsuits, fines, and negative publicity in general. How much are your fees for this work I've asked of you.

Reggi: Supplies and labor will total only five thousand dollars.

Heidi: My, that one bites really hard right now. (*winces hard*) I'll muster it up somehow, I suppose.

Reggi: Well it's not that bad, considering what so many others charge who are not half as good as I am.

Heidi: We really need it, and it hurts dearly right now.

Reggi: Five thousand smackers is a load to lose.

Heidi: I know, but let's work something out.

Reggi: (*shrugs*) Sure, what's cooking? Give me the low down. I'm all ears.

Heidi: (*shrugs*) The door is closed. Only the front secretary is present in this office area right now. Look me directly in the eyes carefully when I speak to you, Reggi. What's the fetish needed to seal this deal between us?

Reggi: (*chuckles, shakes head*) I don't know. (*shrugs*) I have to think on it a bit, if I

even give it any consideration at all.

Heidi: I tell you what. When you make it over to the third horse stall, there is a mentor named Cindy. She's anticipating your appearance. She has a puppy and a dog in heat, all prepped up for ya and waiting. The dog is her partner in crime named Daphne, but Cindy 'll be happy to find a home for you this evening.

Reggi: (*pauses*) It's a deal. The new thrill 'll be worth five thousand dollars to me. I crave fresh raw action, always, anyhow.

Heidi: Hmm, so I've heard. Well we have so much to keep us engaged right about now. How are ya holding up?

Reggi: I'm ripe and ready when you are, as always.

Reggi and Heidi exit

Stage lights gradually dim
Ten minutes later at The Sunrise Shack

3rd mentor, Cindy: (*sitting, counting bills*)

1st mentor, Christy: My word, (*gasps*) see the cash!

3rd mentor, Cindy: Don't get jealous now. A working lady has her pride. She deserves what she gets.

1st mentor, Christy: Well what kind of pride do you have that courts that kind of cash? Cause it shore ain't looks!

3rd mentor, Cindy: Oh honey, I have the body, the manner, and the way about me, but it's the brains that truly matter; and that is where you and so many more are in serious lacking around here!

1st mentor, Christy: I have it all where it matters, but how did your brains fetch that kind of dough? Pulling it in is tough around here.

3rd mentor, Cindy: For me to know and you to find out. All I can say is right here, in this place, you simply need to be alert to the opportunities. The Sunrise Plantation Estate might as well be a pot of gold, for people who are daring enough to play all the games for it around here.

1st mentor, Christy: (*laughs, shakes her head*) Bitch you sold some meat to fetch that in. You absolutely must have sold to more than one, and put a heavy coating of sugar on it, is all I have to say about Anything. Only loads of gas, some exemplary grass, or a dose of damn good ass you ain't got, fetches that kind of bread you're holding.

3rd mentor, Cindy: Bitch, (*counting cash*) eat your heart out.

Knock at the door

3rd mentor, Christy: (*opens door, two policemen*) My word, what could we help you with here? What do you need? Who do you need?

Policeman: We're looking for a mentor named Cindy Lou Who? We heard she was here inside this room at the present time.

3rd mentor, Christy: Well you've come to the right place. (*points*) There she is, and she's a real bitch, let me tell ya.

The two police rush upon 1st mentor, Cindy.

Policeman #1: Get up against the wall, spread eagle!

Policeman #2: (*grabs wrists, brings each one behind her, cuffs her*) You are now under arrest Cindy Lou Who for having sexual relations with

underaged partners. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to remain silent! Come with us.

Policemen #2 and 3rd mentor - Cindy exit

1st mentor, Christy: Yeah, you have your brains in the right place. From what I can see you sit on them every day. *(laughs)* Tootlelou Cindy Who!

Policeman #1, 1st mentor-Christy exit

Scene 2

Sunrise

Enter Earl into Heidi's office

Heidi: *(at the desk, glances up)* I have some news for you.

Earl: What's it my love?

Heidi: Cindy, third mentor, was arrested yesterday around one.

Thane: Really, on what charge?

Heidi: The police claimed it was indecent relationships with minors.

Earl: Aw, hmm, some serious papers are being stacked against her, I can see.

Heidi: I find it both strange and a mite unsettling.

Earl: Were the crimes committed here or elsewhere?

Heidi: I wonder. I know I never made any claim. If the claim was from here, then I wonder who made it?

Earl: Anything is possible in this place. I'm shocked every day by just how crazy everything is.

Heidi: (*sneers, gasps, shrugs*) I mean man, look at the type of service we provide here, for crying out loud! Crazy in, crazy back out. Nothing more to expect, nothing less.

Earl: This hen house has to be the most debauched in all of Texas.

Heidi: Yeah, it might be the best little hen house in Texas after all. We're rounding out top cap from it, however anybody anywhere slices or dices anything.

Earl: We've already rounded out fourteen golden Ms in hand, when all is said and done.

Heidi: Yeah, we're offering a very helpful service here. I mean, these parents are at a point of desperation. I like that part of the picture. We bring positive results.

Earl: But in the end?...(*sighs*)

Heidi: After all the circular talk and the emotional rant honey, (*smiles*) it's only the great big long green meat laying across my hand, and the good feeling I get from it that matters most. I can't live without it personally.

Earl: (*chuckles*) Your words pack punch.

Heidi: It's coming down to this reality.. We both must remain on top of everything around here. We must sleuth around and find out what kind of flow is making this place tick. It's crazy here because neither one of us are not on top of it. No, on the contrary.. This situation is on top of us, and the ram-rod It's shoving so damn hard to us, is not one done in any kind of a good way.

Earl: I honestly don't have much time for any type of sleuth work today. I have a meeting with a state auditor in an hour or so. Who can we trust?

Heidi: Sometimes a real woman has to take charge when a man can't motivate. This one is ripe and ever ready for action. So bring it on, whatever it might Be!

Earl: (*turns, steps out the door*) Chau now. Until later.

Earl exits

Heidi: (*Walks from her office, down through the academy, out the side door, onto the concrete sidewalk toward the small yard facing the horse stable*)

Candy: (*approaching, smiling, skipping along*) What's it now, miss Heidi-ho?

Heidi: I'll admit I'm really hot to trot, but I'm only a ho when it benefits most for me to be one.

Candy: Did you hear, miss Heidi? The bird on the wind travels far and wide.

Heidi: Hear what, pray tell? (*shoves nose up in the air*) I know everything.

Candy: (*smiles, chuckles*) I'll bet you don't know, that I know, that you know, ole Reggi has a long flesh sword that never tires nor dulls.

Heidi: (*gasps*) Do tell? What bird told you so?

Candy: (*smiles*) That's for me to know and you to find out, miss Heidi. The best secrets are those well kept.

Heidi: Ah, but you failed to keep the secret. You just told me so.

Candy: But the best part flies away far from your grasp, doesn't it miss Heidi?

Heidi: (*leans forward, whispers*) But who was it that ever said the cock in hand was better than the one in the bush? Now, it was me who just kindly flew that teeny tiny secret over to you.

Candy: I'll let you in on another kind secret... It was the same liar who ever told you one cock in hand was better than two in the bush! I've slipped you another whisper worth its weight in gold.

Heidi: What will it take? What bird tweeted to you?

Candy: Put a set of veiled eyes up inside the Cajun Queen's stall, inside and outside. Make sure the operation is a black bag deal one hundred percent. You'll be utterly astonished at what you see and hear. I think it's all funny myself. (*smiles*) Really, I do!

Heidi: No problem with that. Reggi 'll tie it all up for me in a jiff.

Candy: (*Laughs, tosses back head*) Reggi.. So who's on the set up now to get a great big smoking pipe shoved around some?

Heidi: That play's mine, honey. It could be you, if you're in.

Candy: (*smiles*) I'm in action already.

Heidi: Pay me what you owe me, and soon.

Candy: Did I ever tell ya 'bout the new line headed my way?

Heidi: Never a word have I heard.

Candy: I'm turning eighteen very soon, in a couple of months.

Heidi: Aw, so nice. Where ya headed off too?

Candy: Southern Cal, I suppose.

Heidi: That's nice. What ya gonna do there?

Candy: Gonna dance. I've been taking lessons of late, ya know.

Heidi: I'm proud of ya. Keep it up like a good girl should.

Candy: I already have an offer to dance competitively for a movie try out. (*smiling, happy*)

Heidi: Aw, that's killer! Who's the company?

Candy: Heavenly Angels. Am I not one in the flesh (*poses, sideways*) already, miss Heidi?

Heidi: My word child. We have a direct line in with the HA there. We here at The Sunrise Plantation Estate, can hook you up into a chief position with the film company for sure. but give me what I am soon to pay for.

Candy: (*shrugs*) Ok, it was Ellie Mae. She told me she dropped the dime.

Heidi: Well who told her?

Candy: She saw it all hidden from behind a certain curtain.

Heidi: Look, don't you dare try to play me. Ellie May has brass, but not that much. She totes a couple of teeny tiny brass peas. She's far from toting a nice set of brass balls, so don't you dare try me on this matter. She told somebody else around here? Who the hell was it!

Candy: (*smiles*) I know.. I know dear, like the flowers grow when the sunlight shows!

Heidi: So how did the dime drop?

Candy: You'll need to pay me more to find out.

Heidi: What's on the stick for the deal between us to go through?

Candy: You like to be smothered in money, don't you?

Heidi: (*shrugs*) Only diamonds are better than gold, honey. Who doesn't?

Candy: Let me give you a good shower of gold then, after the eyes are up. I can trade the show for a steady payout that will enrich us both. Put a bridal veil over your face, for all I care, if it means that much to you.

Heidi: The deal is on... Give me what I want.

Candy: Ok, I will then. It was Cindy, the 3rd mentor.

Heidi: But Cindy is no longer here now, and will never return. She's in the can, to tell the truth about it.

Candy: Yeah, (*smiles*) that I am well aware of.

Heidi: Where did Cindy commit her felonies?

Candy: Where do you think? Right in here, with these dogs. (*laughs*) You knew that.. (*smiles suddenly intimidatingly*) Why did you ever ask?

Heidi: So who was it that turned the dime on Cindy. I know I didn't!

Candy: That will cost you again.

Heidi: (*sighs deeply*) What's the price for this?

Candy: Go down to stall number six with Reggi.

Heidi: Why number six?

Candy: I have a toy with me and really seriously want to watch you in action. You have a dynamite body that would stop a freight train dead on the tracks.

Heidi: You are out of your mind! (*hangs head, sighs, shakes head side to side*) I can't believe this.

Candy: Live and weep, its life.

Heidi: Ok, ok, it's done. No problem with it. Reggi will more than be happy to comply with my request. I'll call her or him for the other work I told you about.

Candy: (*pauses, smiles*) It was Sherri, the medic.

Heidi: My word! My Word! Cindy knows so damn much about this place. She's no doubt blabbing her mouth off about everything she knows.

Candy: I'll give you one on the house since you've been so compliant in my Requests.

Heidi: Sure, why not? Shoot baby, shoot me down again!

Candy: She's talking to some people about filming a documentary on this place. The film company and her lawyer have cut a deal with the judge to let her off the hook if she tells everything.

Heidi: My word, my stomach is in knots from being so nervous!

Candy: No worries for now, miss Heidi. It will be more than a year before the documentary comes out.

Heidi: (*calms*) Ok, ok, I'm alright. I'm alright. Thanks for everything. I suppose I'll be moving along now.

Candy: Cherry O, miss Heidi-ho, be very watchful of the great big flutes you blow.

Heidi: (*gasps*) Yes, yes, great advice, great advice. I'll surely be taking heed.

Heidi, Candy exit

Scene 3

At the medic's office

Enter Heidi

Heidi: Hello, hello, kind day for a good show.

Sherri: Well hello to you the same. Work certainly is piling up these calls and these newly allocated medical assignments. My assistants are overwhelmed of Late.

Heidi: I'm truly sorry to hear that. I am aware of several calls.

Sherri: Ace and Ida slashed themselves. Bennie leaped from the stairwell last Evening. It must be the full moon or something in the kool-aid around Here. Nobody has any real answers for sure.

Heidi: Blame it on the moon or the food and water.

Sherri: Some have said that. I was only being sarcastic.

Heidi: Maybe the fact of Cindy getting locked up can be blamed on the same?

Sherri: Really? I haven't heard anything about that. What was the charge?

Heidi: The bird on the wind hasn't flown your way yet?

Sherri: (*laughs, gasps*) What on earth is with you, Heidi? I don't know anything. The phantom lips on the walls seldom spill their secrets to me.

Heidi: The walls may remain silent, but the ghost beside the wall may not be.

Sherri: Look, Let's get something straight right now. I do my job around here, and it's a big one let me tell you. I avoid all of this mixed up riff-raff I hear about. Don't you dare attempt to pull me into it. I don't want any part of it.

Heidi: Free souls have been known to pull themselves into the cell block. Such a thing occurs every week somewhere. Tread softly in these parts, miss Sherri. That's all I have to say. Numerous important people stand lower down that you may not even be aware of.

Sherri: What? (*gasps*) How dare you speak such words! If such a thing be the case, then you had better heed your own warning, eh?

Heidi exits

Stage lights darken for ten minutes. Stage lights brighten

*Down by the hay barn
Enter Sherri and Dakota*

Dakota: Sherri, Sherri, save my soul. Let me live before I'm ever old. I don't know unto where my future has been sold. There is no life down here scratching with the chickens and living on the dole.

Sherri: You were always a masterful poet and songwriter, Dakota. Sing a song of sweet wind and lullaby, a masterful one to make the young girls cry. Sing us a song of blossoming flowers and exotic waterfalls making lover's showers. Sing us all a song to give us a great morning start, make it come directly from the heart.

Dakota: I'm many different things to many different people, Sherri. I wear many different hats. My life is that song you seek.

Sherri: Fine tastes often arrive in numerous flavors.

Dakota: And I know that special one many among my company loves most.

Sherri: A butterfly flutters on the wind, while a bird tweets. The two never argue.

Dakota: And neither shall I. What's it?

Sherri: Do you know Reggi?

Dakota: Maybe, I might, if it be in the daylight.

Sherri: What's her take on Heidi?

Dakota: She's smooth, she slides down hard on the big stick like she's been greased all up or something, so she's told me. She burns the candle at both ends, which is a very rare talent, Reggi said to me in earnest. She gets big kicks out of it, often going into an absolute frenzy, so the story goes. She has a fault though, sweet Sherri, a serious fault.

Sherri: What shall it cost me?

Dakota: Two souped up pink M&Ms will fetch you the absolute truth.

Sherri: (*reaches into her coat pocket*) Here, the deal is sealed.

Dakota: She welches on his payment fees, when she pays in money. She's greedy as Grinch, you know. Wait a minute.. You gave me four hits, right?

Sherri: Yeah, that's right. I need you to speak with Reggi for me. Tell him I know of his complaint, and ask him if he knows of any walls that need veiled

eyes. If he says yes, tell him to come see me.

Dakota: No problem.

Sherri: There is one more little thing, since we're speaking among ourselves
Here.

Dakota: *(laughs)* Go ahead, be my guest. I'm ripe and ready for anything, always.

Sherri: *(reaches into her white smock)* Here's two more, but be warned, they are
Apache treble soups.

Dakota: My word Sherri! That Apache slap bears a stone-yard wind there.

Sherri: Yeah! *(nods, sighs)* It dissolves very well in lemonade or hot tea. The
sensation is irresistible to those who esteem it most.

Dakota: Sometimes owls speak the word needing to be spoken best.

Sherri: I never was the type to turn a dime for the hell of it. Your business is all
yours, as long as you leave me and mine out of it. I had nothing to do with
Cindy, the third mentor taking the hard rap. You're welcome to what's left.

Sherri exits

Enter Heidi on the sidewalk by the pond

Dakota: *(walking up from the stable area)* Hello, miss Heidi.

Heidi: What brings you around out here?

Dakota: Why, the fresh air and sunshine, not to mention the peace of mind. What's
it, my fancy li'le lapping puppy dog?

Heidi: Where are you coming from? What's cooking on the fire?

Dakota: The hay barn and the stables. (*shrugs*) Not busy at the moment with anything in particular.

Heidi: The ducks, the birds, the butterflies, the flowers and the bees are so nice this time of year.

Dakota: Where ya headed, miss Heidi? What is your aim?

Heidi: You mentioned the horse stables, well I haven't been there in a long while. Let's go over that way, Dakota. What-a-ya say?

Dakota: (*shrugs*) Sure, why not? We're almost around the pond now, and headed Back. So what's it?

Heidi: Better words are spoken behind bushes, walls, and doors, I always said.

Dakota: Sure. (*smiles*) We'll be nearing the Cajun Queen's stall. She's out for a walk now and will not be back until after dark. I agree with that saying, Mrs. Heidi, the good li'le pretty puppy dog.

Dakota and Heidi enter the stall of the Cajun Queen

Heidi: Eyes and ears often see and hear much. Do you understand?

Dakota: Yes..., so what's it? Speak! Only the birds, the bees and the spirits we please have ears and eyes.

Heidi: And knowledge can be outright dangerous, especially when it comes from a manipulative, outright lying mouth. What shall it take for me to buy a well delivered gift of silence from a lady such as yourself?

Dakota: There's no problem with you netting the job, but this is a big job. I mean, a Jim Jubal Dandy of a big job! So... it's gonna cost a bit more than an ordinary job. And by the way Miss Heidi, I ain't exactly a lady. I love

staying on the thrusting side of everything, especially when I rub and pat a pretty li'le puppy dog's fine head.

Heidi: So, what's the price? Be out with it. Time's a wastin'.

Dakota: I wanna an all round quartet-vid show from you. What if I can get ole Reggi in on this action? I don't know who the two trollops 'll be. I'll have to think about it. Maybe we'll have a little liquid gold showering down, a lot of lifesaver flavors being relished, juicy lotus being eaten, and some nice long fat bratwurst being shoved and swallowed. The Cajun Queen herself might even want to get into this. What about it, love? You agree, and the ice-job requested is already well done!

Heidi: My gosh! (*pulls her hair*) Oh, I don't know? (*gasps, frustratingly*) What else could it be?

Dakota: It's a yes all the way, or a flat out no from me on this job.

Heidi: I don't want to, but such a thing truly needs doing. Fortunes are on the stake. Oh, such a tangled net we unwittingly weave, when only we practice to deceive. Living life only to the sound of rolling dice, robs us all of our sugar and spice. Finally such a cruel trap has now been set, when alas, what stands to roll the quickest is my own head.

Stage lights fade out. Heidi and Dakota exit

Scene 4

*Daybreak at The Sunrise Shack
Feminine screams, wails of terror*

Enter 4th mentor, Daphne

4th mentor, Daphne: *(on body radio)* Medic to the office quickly. Medic needed
Now. Arrive very soon and don't ask me how.

Morgan: What's it?

4th mentor, Daphne: It's an emergency at The Sunrise Shack. Ellie Mae and Candy
are totally motionless in bed, and ice cold to the touch. There
seems to be no breathing. Their bodies appear to have
already gone into rigor mortis. I'll just be frank with you on
the matter.

Morgan: Ten four, I'll Roger that. Copy?

4th mentor, Daphne: I copy, over and out.

Morgan: Three of us are down in a jiff.

4th mentor, Daphne: Copy, and out.

Enter Morgan, and two EMP workers with a stretcher

Morgan: Candy is definitely cold to the touch. What on Earth do you reckon?

1st EMP worker: We shall find out after we collect samples *(grabs the arms, lifts)*
No sign of struggle I see, no bruises, no blood stains.

2nd EMP worker: I see no food nor drink around here, nor empty cups. *(grabs legs, lifts)*

1st EMP worker, 2nd EMP worker exit with Candy, Ellie Mae on stretcher

Morgan: I can't fathom the connections. Why did this dumb thing ever have to
occur?

Ace: I hope it wasn't something bad that caused this.

Morgan: You mean some-thing bad, or some body?

Ace: Yeah, like somebody. I cut myself, but I would never do anything to anybody
Else.

Morgan: Did you see anything last night or anytime?

Ace: Not a thing. I was fast asleep. I was reading my books when I awoke.

Morgan: Did you see anything at all?

Ace: (*laughs*) Only the usual things, like Dakota 'n Meg down here doing their
things, all out in the open like they do these days.

Morgan: Like what?

Ace: (*smiles, laughing*) I mean, the way they were smackin' and gruntin' out here
in this cot, you'd thought they both were a-starvin' to death!

Morgan: (*laughs*) Really? Was it like that?

Ace: Yeah, and it didn't matter which way they turned around in this cot either, let
me tell ya. The sounds almost caused me to burst out laughing.

Morgan: Sittin' up or layin' down, you couldn't tell which one was boss. They
both lay where urges were soon found, and they dove headfirst into the
Sauce.

Ace: (*laughs*) Yeah, somethin' like that!

Morgan: But let's get serious. You didn't see or hear anything about these two
dying in here?

Ace: Not a single thing.

Morgan: You don't think it had anything to do with Cindy getting locked up, do ya.

Ace: *(laughs)* Look, I told you no, and I mean no.

Morgan: Well, who would know? Who do you know who might know about this?

Ace: I have no idea. *(laughs)*

Chloe: The truth will come out about this. That's what I know. You know?

Morgan: Keep an ear and an eye out. If you hear anything let me know.

Chloe: What's in it for me?

Morgan: What? Who have you heard talk like that, girl?

Chloe: *(smiles)* Everybody around here.

Morgan: Who? I don't talk like that. Never have, never will.

Chloe: Everybody, *(laughs)* I mean, everybody wheels and deals like that around here, and have since I began my stay.

Enter Earl

Earl: How is everybody? What kind of beef is in the tray with you today?

Chloe: Good. Nothing's up.

Morgan: They're a-goin' alright, besides the fact of what happened.

Ace: They're going ok. Nothin' that big other than what's already occurred, for sure.

4th mentor, Daphne: Something hangs in the air about things not being right around here. Don't you think so?

Earl: Of course, that's why we're going to get to the bottom of everything. They are doing tests, but my gut tells me something screwy is going on.

4th mentor, Daphne: Let me ask you this.. Ace stood here and said Dakota and Meg were here last night doin' the thing.

Earl: Yeah, Dakota stays in the next room down. People go and come all the time, right?

4th mentor, Daphne: No, they are not supposed to. We section rooms off by groups. Dakota is not in this specific group. I can tell you that much.

Earl: True, but you and I both know it happens. That reality cannot be denied.

4th mentor, Daphne: Do you remember when Quinn got slammed?

Earl: Yes, it hasn't been long ago.

Morgan: Yes, we're still patching her up from it.

4th mentor, Daphne: Think about it.. Just think about it for a moment now. Every time somebody around here gets dusted, Dakota is never far away from the incident.

Morgan: Come to think about it, you're right. Dakota is always somewhere nearby when something happens. The thought keeps passing through my mind where she's employed to engage these situations.

4th mentor, Daphne: Yeah, she's surely a person of interest. You really need to speak with her, Earl.

Earl: Yeah, I agree. I am first light tomorrow. Me and the investigator may have a

chat with her first light in the morning.

Stage lights dim out. 4th mentor-Daphne, Morgan, Chloe, Ace, Earl exit

Five minutes later

Sunrise

Enter Earl into The Sunrise Shack

2nd mentor, Rachel: Everybody up and at 'em now. (*claps*) We have horses to feed, and comb, and walk! Then we have a nice sized garden with strawberries and the like to hoe out, as we always do. After we shower, we can then go to eat.

Dakota: (*standing beside her cot, yawning*)

Earl: I need to speak with you Dakota, outside, if possible.

Dakota: Ok, sure, why not? All I really want to do now is go back to bed.

Both step outside

Earl: Do you know anything about what happened to Ellie Mae and Candy Girl?

Dakota: No, why? I was nowhere near when all of this garbage occurred.

Earl: Well, honestly I have reason to think you might know something. This is very important. You need to speak up.

Dakota: I'm telling you, I don't know anything, Earl. You need to go talk to somebody else about this.

Earl: Well, I have reason to think you may. What's your status around here?

Dakota: Scholar and patient. I do what I must to keep myself alive in this world.

Earl: Dakota, don't play dumb with me. I mean your status among the other scholars?

Dakota: I'm just a cohabitor, Earl, a roommate, if you will.

Earl: No, I think you may be more than that, Dakota. I think you run the roost around here with these hens. I think you may be the go to person around here for anything.

Dakota: Oh yeah? Well you keep on thinking, Earl.

Earl: I also think if somebody is in need of a bump, you are always more than glad to provide it, that is if the price is right.

Dakota: Your crazy Earl. You need to be a patient here more than I do. I can see That! Why are you gettin' squirrely with me, bo-pop?

Earl: Come on Dakota. You're going to have no choice but to come out with it. Get it all over with.

Dakota: That's it Earl. I don't know a damn thing. Why are you pushing me like this?

Earl: Yeah, you're right. That's it Dakota. Tomorrow morning after you eat, come to my office. I have a man who wants to speak with you.

Dakota: Sure, I'll be there.. *(smiles, clenches teeth)* Yes, I certainly will be there big boy..

Dakota, Earl, 2nd mentor-Daphne, exit. Stage lights darken

Scene 5

Ten minutes later

Earls office in the rear of the academic building

0930

Enter Dakota

Walks up to Earl's desk

Earl: You know something about these two deaths we've had inside The Sunrise Shack. The thought is horrible. I don't like thinking about any of this. We need to know what you know, and I feel that you know something.

Dakota: *(smiles)* I've told you that I don't know anything. I'm only a scholar with the others.

Earl: But you're the big fish around here, the one stop go-to person. Too many others have said so.

Dakota: I don't care, Earl. I don't know anything.

Earl: Well, let me tell you what. I have a person who'd love to speak with you in regard to this matter. He's here with us right now. *(points)* Mr. West!

Enter Mr. West from the front office area of the administration department

Mr West: Hello Dakota. I'm Allen West from the Tawanna County detective department. I would love to speak with you for a bit in regard to these two deaths on the property here.

Dakota: Sure, why not? Everybody else certainly has.

Mr. West: *(faces Earl)* Give us some time alone, please.

Earl: No problem. I was on my way.

Earl exists

Mr. West: We have reason to believe you might know something about these two deaths that occurred here.

Dakota: On what grounds? Why me?

Mr. West: I've already interviewed several of your co-scholars. They have indicated where you were the number one butch in the roost around here.

Dakota: Oh yeah? Well, what is that supposed to mean, Mr. West?

Mr. West: It means you controlled everything coming in and going out around here.

Dakota: So what? Maybe I did.

Mr. West: If a favor wasn't delivered to satisfaction, you have no problems beating this person down in exchange for a favor from the specific female, or another one indebted to this specific female.

Dakota: Maybe I did, maybe I didn't. What's it to anybody?

Mr. West: Well, we also know those bodies were served kool-aid spiked with some extremely potent opioids.

Dakota: So how did my name get mixed up in this?

Mr. West: Have you ever heard of Jack Rocks, or soup spikes, or pink M & Ms?

Dakota: Maybe, maybe not.

Mr. West: These two bodies were full of this stuff, and its deadly stuff. My next

question might be where did this stuff originate, but I will not bother asking that right now.

Dakota: And?

Mr. West: Once we discover from whence this originated, and we link it back to you, You're toast Dakota. It's all simple as that. Face the reality of this situation. You're talking life in the can or maybe even a death sentence.

Dakota: *(sighs, laughs)* I can't believe this. *(hangs head)* I can't believe the people around here, especially the people in charge of this place. *(rigid face, picks head up)*

Mr. West: What's the matter Dakota? Now is your magic moment to speak.

Dakota: I tell you what. *(sighs)* Let's keep this between us. You give me a few days, say a couple of weeks, and I'll drop all the links in this you'll ever need, right into your hand.

Mr. West: I tell you what Dakota. I had a feeling you would come through. There is a pink package box on the second shelf underneath the office assistant's table up front in the greeting area. Here is the key. *(hands over a small key)* This key is for you, and you alone. Walk back there and drop this evidence inside when you get it.

Dakota: They will not allow me to go up there.

Mr. West: They will, because I am going to speak with them about it. Tell Daphne to let you out. She could even escort you, should you need one.

Dakota: Give me time. The goods you want will come, and you or nobody else will simply not believe it.

Mr. West: You've done a good deed Dakota. Never second guess yourself or doubt what you are doing.

Dakota: So what's in it for me? If you know so much about me then you know all about my woodshed freaks and fetishes, eh?

Mr. West: Dakota, we'll speak later on in a more private location. You come through and the hitch isn't a problem.

Dakota: Fine then, the deed is good as done.

Stage lights darken gradually, Mr. West exits

*Stage lights suddenly pop back on
All light is directed on one person*

Dakota: The time has now arrived, the end now draws near, no moment of exhilaration, yet an occasion for apprehension and fear. The trial shall be lengthy, the interrogation intense, all gallantry shall be retreating in this situation of great suspense. Will the guilty really go down? Or shall the blood stained hands survive? In great regret many shall drown, when horrible Themis crosses the great divide.

Stage lights snap off. Dakota exits, curtains fall

*Act 3
Scene 1*

Outside by the water wheel and the pond

Enter Quinn and Chloe

Quinn: *(walking along with a cane on the sidewalk while bandaged up.)*

Chloe: *(approaching)* Fancy seeing the likes of you walking along in a place such

as this. The wind is puffing so pleasantly, the flowers are waving as we amble along. I think I'll pause by the pond and paint a portrait of the scene some time in the future from now.

Quinn: I was saying the same about you. Where have you been these days?
Painting portraits, should I presume?

Chloe: I've been out and about, walking to and fro in this little world unto itself in which we live.

Quinn: Does the wind carry any pleasant whispers? What about the little birds on the wind?

Chloe: You haven't heard any?

Quinn: (*smiles*) Heard some serious slapping goin' on down by the horse stables, most every evening to tell the truth.

Chloe: That's only good icing on the great big cake around here, Quinn. Did any Noticeable names fly out at you?

Quinn: Sure did. One was Reggi, another was Daphne, another was Heidi. I thought I heard another, but I didn't catch that one. I also heard a horse do loads of grunting.

Chloe: Wonder what the grunting was about this time?

Quinn: Same as last time

Chloe: Don't be silly, girl.

Quinn: I'm not. This whole place around here, is one great big business, let me tell Ya. You don't even know the half of it, as most people don't, and nobody on the outside would ever believe anything if it was ever told from inside this place.

Chloe: Things have been kind of quiet around here lately, to speak the truth.

Quinn: Far as you know.

Chloe: You heard about the tragedy the day before yesterday, didn't you?

Quinn: No, I've been laid up, down and out cold, getting stitched up, while losing enough blood to fill a cup.

Chloe: I heard you took a big ice whoopin'.

Quinn: Yeah, that damn butch tried to kill me!

Chloe: So what's it now?

Quinn: I have no idea. What's it on your end?

Chloe: You heard about the dead around here, did you?

Quinn: I know about the dead fish, but other than that, no. You have to remember I've been laid up, Chloe.

Chloe: Yeah, I was laid up myself, with a great big jig stick filled with the right kind of joy juice, eh?

Quinn: Naw, (*laughs*) I mean, I was down and out. That big butch pounced on me, and for little to nothin' at that.

Chloe: Ellie Mae and Candy are dead, Quinn.

Quinn: In a way I kin see where Ellie Mae would have gotten the saucy pickle, Chloe. Candy was way too kind in her own manner of being, ya know?

Chloe: Somebody dusted them, so it has been said. I believe it that way, to be

honest about everything.

Quinn: Who around here would ever do such a thing?

Chloe: Guess who would be the closest bet.

Quinn: Dakota maybe, (*sighs*) I don't know.

Chloe: Maybe, but she was being questioned hard.

Quinn: By who, pray tell?

Chloe: By Earl and a detective from way over in Scurlock.

Quinn: Damn, (*pauses, gazes out*) reckon she had any hand in the dirt?

Chloe: I don't know for a fact, but my gut says she did.

Quinn: You know she did it. She's into everything that goes on around here.

Chloe: Hey look, there's a pink box on the shelf underneath the desk up at the front in the admin building.

Quinn: Where the secretary sits?

Chloe: Yeah, the great big fat woman with all the ugly tattoos.

Quinn: Reckon she's a peach eater?

Chloe: I don't know! (*laughs*) Why don't you ask her?

Quinn: Some crazy good strange would do me right about now, but what about the pink box?

Chloe: Hanna claimed that's where Dakota was supposed to drop any evidence she

had on the people who whacked Ellie Mae and Candy girl.

Quinn: *(pauses, gazes)* If I don't say so that's a mighty fine thing to know right about now.

Stage lights dim out. Chloe, Quinn exit

Scene 2

In the library outside the academic building

Quinn: Today is a fine day for reading, I might say.

Mia: Yeah, I'm in a good mood to read, to tell the truth, after a fine walk by the pond and the water wheel earlier when the sun was coming up.

Quinn: How did you escape horse and garden duty?

Mia: You did horse and garden duty this morning?

Quinn: Yeah, several others were out there too.

Mia: I've never done horse and garden duty on Sunday.

Quinn: Hmm..Who else was out there this morning?

Mia: Ole Reggi was out there.

Quinn: In the fields with the garden?

Mia: No, at the horse stables.

Quinn: That's strange, I think. Don't you?

Mia: Yeah, I guess. I never paid much attention to it, to be honest.

Quinn: What was she doing?

Mia: Wiring lights inside the horse stables, and doing other types of wiring.

Quinn: That's all she was doing here? Nothing ever is as it seems around this place.
You know that, Mia.

Mia: (*whispers audibly*) Hey, I hear she's putting up eyes all over this place.
Somebody around here sees all and knows all.

Quinn: Hmm.. That's crazy. Something is up around here, for sure. The general
sensation hangs so heavily in the air I could cut it with a knife.

Mia: If nothing else there is always a hardcore smooch going on between
somebody somewhere.

Quinn: Some of these tramps will be doing some jaw droppin' junk, from what I
hear being said so many times.

Mia: What you hear is not the half of it, to tell the truth. I see all kinds of crazy
stuff just walking around in the dorm area.

Quinn: I wonder if we can believe everything we hear in this place.

Mia: Depends on what you've heard.

Quinn: Have you heard about the kinds of jobs they'll be setting these girls up with
who are aging out?

Mia: Some, but not enough to make anything out of it.

Quinn: Almost all of them wind up dancing in the strip clubs and working for the
hardcore picture shows.

Mia: I mean, these trixies tell these people here they want to fetch some heavy bags filled with cash, and these jobs pay more than you would ever believe. This place has all kinds of contacts out there.

Quinn: How much do you think they make?

Mia: I mean, any go-go club you investigate, even a third rate one, pays six hundred dollars a week as a base salary, plus two hundred a night in tips. On weekends they make a thousand dollars in tips alone. A top rate Vegas club pays two to three times that much!

Quinn: What about the picture-shows? I wonder how much they pay out?

Mia: I hear one movie has seven sets. Each set has six shots. One set averages ten thousand dollars for a rookie, I hear. One shot can net three thousand dollars. I mean, think about that Quinn! These dogs can turn a hundred thousand a year and more easily, the first year! What other career is there out there that grants such a tremendous return?

Quinn: We should consider that. I'll be aging out in three months.

Mia: Yeah, I'm thinking about it! I will as well, in about the same amount of time. The only thing is I want a family too. I want a husband and kids, and so forth, to be honest. I also am sure these people who own this facility must be meat hunters for these go go clubs and these hardcore picture show companies. I've noticed the ones who they line up look among the youngest, and the most endowed.

Quinn: I don't want that marriage business. I can see myself getting my kicks for a while, and investing my money in something that will make money for me. Maybe when I'm set up I'll find a man. I don't know about getting married. I'll have to think on that one for a while. (*shoves her breasts forward*) Look at my nice, well shaped bosom, and I know how to use what I have. I know I have what it takes to turn a true fortune.

Mia: Let's walk over here and grab a cool book. I like to read.

Quinn: I think I'll mosey on further back in the library here. I want to see what these other ponies were doing while I was away.

Mia: Chau now, see you around.

Mia exits

Quinn walks toward the rear area of the library

Ace: *(smiles, hangs head, picks it up)* Hmm.. I can't believe what the cat drug up.

Quinn: 'Tis been a long while, to be sure. How's it?

Ace: Hither and thither, this 'n that, nothing lost nothing gained. So I suppose there's nobody around to blame. What ya say?

Quinn: When a flock of geese flies over above, the ka ka always falls on somebody's head.

Ace: Nothing happens by itself without motivation, for sure.

Quinn: Dammit girl, your arms look munked-up!

Ace: Yeah, I've had some tough times. It's the only way anybody pays me any attention 'round here.

Quinn: Well, ya could of sought me out. I'll say hello and speak.

Ace: You're always around when a person needs to be around somebody, Quinn. I'll say that much for you.

Quinn: Thanks, I like to hear that.

Ace: I have a lovely gift for you. (*reaches into her shirt pocket*) Here, it's all yours.
I don't have any use for it.

Quinn: Wow! I see two up and loaded pink M&Ms. Where did ya get those?

Ace: Found 'em..

Quinn: Where at? I've never seen stuff like that laying around.

Ace: In Elie Mae's room after they carried her away.

Quinn: What are you asking for 'em?

Ace: I don't need anything. They both are all yours.

Quinn: Not even a kind favor?

Ace: I'm squeaky clean. I don't need anything, including favors. I've never had a favor, and never want one to tell the truth. I'm not that type.

Quinn: Thanks, girly girl. You're a true friend. Should you ever change your mind in regard to favors just let me know. I lead a life of kindness.

Ace: My mind shall never change. You're free as a bird with that power pack.

Quinn: Free as a bird! I like that.

Stage lights dim out. Quinn and Ace exit

Scene 3

Down by the water wheel along the sidewalk

Enter Chloe

Chloe: (*Walking along*) Sweet warm sunshine, just walking along, with nowhere to go and singing my song. No time for pop, no time for jell, just singing my own song with a story to tell. Wish I could run fast as a deer, or fly far as an eagle, or be some lost damsel in a palace filled with cheer, even if such a thing wasn't legal.

Quinn: (*walking along facing Chloe*) Well I do declare what have we here? Might it be a doll, an angel, or a demon ever so near?

Chloe: That would depend on you.

Quinn: On me, how so?

Chloe: She who behaves like a demon gets treated like one, everytime.

Quinn: I really want to be your favorite angel.

Chloe: I think I pick up on your drift...(*shrugs*) maybe. What's in it for me?

Quinn: Do you like the moon?

Chloe: I don't shy away from a little moon pie, every now and again my lady.

Quinn: I'm overjoyed to know that. Such is a fine secret to know out here by the water wheel like this.

Chloe: What kind of nuts hang underneath the good limb, dear angel of The Sunrise Shack?

Quinn: The pink kind that could take you to the moon, in at least two damn good Ways.

Chloe: It's been awhile, quite a while. I want 'em both, my sweet angel. For some

reason being out here by this water wheel walking along like this, really puts me in the mood for a number of heart racing vices.

Quinn: Are you on, or not?

Chloe: Sure! Yeah the sunshine and the wind feel rather sweet, so why not?

Quinn: Give me some take. Slather me some lather.

Chloe: Alright, be down at stall nine in maybe an hour. Word is on the out where Reggi will be in doing some more work, and putting out a few fires for this person or that.

Quinn: Knowing that makes my heart nearly leap from my breast right about now.

Chloe: I'll let you in on some more. I'm almost certain he's working in tandem with and for ole Heidi dog, herself. Frankly, when I'm in the mood, I don't care, personally. But honestly, however, I prefer a long fat bratwurst over a Fuzzy peach. I don't mind it for a good friend, don't get me wrong now. I'll take a good hard plunge on her account. Smoking a long firm bratwurst gives me a high beyond measure, to be honest. A good heavy load of bratwurst honey grants more energy to me than pleasure itself, between you and me, Quinn. I hate it if I disappoint you now.

Quinn: Aw, no, no, no! I never heard of such from you. You seem so innocent.

Chloe: Don't think bad of me now. I don't go around spreading gossip in these parts, so you'd better listen close the first time. Ole Reggi got up with me in stall three maybe four evenings ago. He or she, asked me if I wanted to get in on some rocking socking tag team action.

Quinn: What did you tell her?

Chloe: I said yeah, why not? I told her exactly how I liked it and what I wanted. I got every bit of it to the last damn drop. I can say that much.

Quinn: Who were the co-conspirators?

Chloe: You won't believe it, dolly.

Quinn: Ole Heidi herself, an' Meg, I'll wager?

Chloe: She gets down, let me tell ya. Don't allow her meek manners to fool ya.
And Reggi done everything exactly right. I can vouch for that.

Quinn: That's interesting... It's even funny just a bit.

Chloe: No! If you don't believe me, walk down to visit ole Reggi and ask her for a
U Disk copy of the video the camera inside the place took. Everything is all
there in close up.

Quinn: I bet there will be a price for it.

Chloe: Yeah, that much I'm sure, but nothing you can't or wouldn't pay.

Quinn: Yeah, I'm sure..

Chloe: Don't hesitate. My words will not describe the fun you are going to have.

Quinn: Is he down there now?

Chloe: Leave here now and go seek him out.

Quinn: *(Smiles)* I think I'm going to brush out the horses and scatter a little hay.

Chloe: I think you should. Chau now, baby doll.

Quinn: Adieo.

Chloe exits

Down in stall nine

Quinn: (*walking up*) Hey, hey, what's on for today? I sense a bit of stir here inside the golden hay.

Enter Reggi

Reggi: A load of work. I can tell you that much around here. Not much play in the golden hay today.

Quinn: I'm in the mood for much, to speak the truth. How might I be employed?

Reggi: Anything is possible with a creative mind. I ask the same question from time to time.

Quinn: On the surface, you wear a beautiful dress. You appear shockingly feminine, Reggi.

Reggi: Oh? The intent is there. Yet I have it all where it counts, and at times I'm willing to share.

Quinn: You are an attractive female, to be honest.

Reggi: I am a female, alright. I am so much more to go with it.

Quinn: But, oh my gosh! What I have heard. (*gasps*)

Reggi: Yes, even a real woman can. I have two flavors, plus a ripe and really sweet lifesaver. You and many more may kindly have your pick. Don't believe that? If I was the kind to kiss and tell I could toss out many a stainless name your way.

Quinn: Does the sword truly cut the cake as good as I hear it can, Reggi?

Reggi: Without a doubt, the most pleasant flavor always melts best in one's white hot mouth, not in their hands.

Quinn: (*Explodes into laughter*) My stars and garters, honey, I've heard it all! Thinking about everything I've heard causes me to pause and wonder if a toy baby doll could swallow light poles.

Reggi: Too many damn sure love to try. I can affirm that much right here and now.

Quinn: I heard you were employed around here today. What kind of load is worth the work?

Reggi: As always, a little electric work is what I specialize in.

Quinn: And conning innocent li'le toy baby dolls into swallowing light poles (*laughs*)?

Reggi: That's not nice now. There's not much con game in it. The ones I always encounter are hungry for a little more before I even meet up with them. They'd near-bout knock me down and take whatever I didn't agree to serve out, to speak the truth on the matter.

Quinn: (*smiles*) Unsheathe that sword I hear is so gorgeous for me to inspect.

Reggi: Quinn now, I have so much to do.

Quinn: Naw, come on. What's holding ya back?

Reggi: The mood isn't settling with me right about now.

Quinn: Awe listen, the she-male has a head-ache.

Reggi: I have much to do for me to spend my time playing. Not being rude but Honest.

Quinn: How much are you being paid?

Reggi: Ten grand, if the she-dog delivers the rabbit at my feet like she promised.

Quinn: Has she ever welched out?

Reggi: She frauds me all the time. She delivers very well on personal favors, however. I have a blast every time, to be honest. But I am reaching a point where I had much rather have my money.

Quinn: Do you believe in sling throwing stones, Reggi?

Reggi: When doing so is necessary, for sure.

Quinn: Do you ever hunt birds?

Reggi: From time to time. I like ducks and turkey more than small tweety birds, However.

Quinn: What if I told you I know how to slay two nice fat turkeys with a single stone, Reggi?

Reggi: Sounds like a great way to conserve on stones.

Quinn: I know you have veiled eyes up in The Cajun Queen's stall, but what about stall three?

Reggi: Sure, almost everywhere and every stall has three hundred and sixty degree veiled eyes up by now.

Quinn: How long have they been up?

Reggi: Two weeks by now, and working extraordinarily well.

Quinn: What favor would it take for me to fetch a pen drive of the clips over the

past week in stall three and in the Cajun Queen's stall?

Reggi: I have more favors right now on the limb than I can possibly carry around and attend to.

Quinn: Work with me. I have a pigeon I want to knock out of the sky.

Reggi: I'll skin your pigeon for you as well with what I have.

Quinn: The queen pigeon, you mean?

Reggi: Yup! That is the one, for sure.

Quinn: What do you need from me? I'm game for anything, to be honest, and fearless as I am unwilling to hold back. I'll warn you right now, I go all the way with pleasure.

Reggi: (*laughs*) So who is the queen bee you want to roast around here?

Quinn: I have a problem with the butch who rules this roost. She abused her authority with me. We can't allow it to continue on as it has for so long Now. An address has been forthcoming for a while.

Reggi: (*laughs*) I get it. I get it. I know right who you speak of. She deserves a good hard smacking.

Quinn: So, what's it? What will it take?

Reggi: I have the pen drive right now. You are the first I've told, but I make my own personal copies at my home computer of everything any camera I put up anywhere shows.

Quinn: What? (*gasps*) Why?

Reggi: I get my kicks watching all of the insane garbage that goes on in places all

around. I know all kinds of whispered stuff, not to mention the many sins actually committed by so many sickening innocent saints. I have red hot stuff politicians will pay tens of thousands for in cash. You wouldn't believe me even if I was to tell you. These super rich bitches in the big houses behind the stone walls and the armed guards, with the German Shepherds and Dobbermen and hardly ever come out or go anywhere..? Think about that for a moment..! I have every bit of it on film I can pull up close to. None will ever be able to lie their way out of anything when I'm finished with them.

Quinn: (*gasps*) Damn, you're a real sick dog!

Reggi: We all have our wood shed habits and addictions, not to mention our wood shed toy doll babies.

Quinn: So what 'll it take?

Reggi: If I could wave a magic wand, (*swallows hard*) what I want more than anything is to savor a top Apache high while my great big peace pipe is being smoked by an angel who does everything but hold back.

Quinn: No problem at all. I'll do you so much better than that. Make any wish known while the magic genie is in action, and the delivery shall be swift and full. When and where?

Reggi: In maybe ten minutes over inside the tool shed. (*shoves right hand into purse*) By the way, here are the goods you just requested. (*lays two pen drives into Quinn's right hand*)

Quinn: You'll come to me for seconds. This shall be a ride you'll never forget.

Quinn & Reggi exit

Stage lights fade out. Ten minutes pass.

Scene 4

The entrance into the administration building

Enter Quinn

Quinn: *(walks into the front area at lunchtime the following day, where the receptionist is. The area is empty as is the entire administration area at large. Quinn spots the pink box behind the front counter. She sees the lock, slowly pulls at the lid., it opens. Dakota has forgotten to lock it. She drops the two pen drives inside, closes the box, steps from behind the counter, then casually walks back out the front door)*

Quinn is walking down the sidewalk toward the pond

Enter Brandy

Brandy: *(walking toward Quinn)* Hello, I thought I heard you in the administration Area earlier.

Quinn: Yeah, I was scheduled to speak with Earl. You know, from time to time he wants us to make one on one contact with him.

Brandy: How did you make it inside? There was no request handed to me or the other front desk secretary allowing for it.

Quinn: I simply grabbed the door knob, twisted, and pulled. Somebody must have forgotten to lock up. Where were you? Nobody was in the admin area at all when I made my way inside.

Brandy: I stepped out for some extra food. I have my figure that I must maintain. I didn't get this fluffy from withholding anything, I assure you on that.

Quinn: Where was everybody else?

Brandy: They all had a meeting off campus with several parents. The only two present were the two front desk secretarial attendants, being myself and Jezebel.

Quinn: Where was Jezebel then?

Brandy: I think she momentarily stepped into the kitchen storage area back There where the coffee pot sits.

Quinn: What on earth might have drawn her away from her post?

Brandy: To take a food service supply list to Earl.

Quinn: Where was Heidi? Usually she is always there when nobody else can be Found.

Brandy: I don't know. She was out and about, and around somewhere. She's hard as hell to keep up with. About like trying to follow a butterfly on a spring wind.

Quinn: For some reason I want to laugh about all of this. I don't know why any of this strikes me as funny at all!

Brandy: Honestly, there isn't really much to laugh at around here, except the debauchment and outright stupidity of mankind in general.

Quinn: Naw, it makes me want to cry. I laugh but I really mean to cry. Everybody should know better, I feel.

Brandy: Those two scholars who died, Ellie Mae and Candy, I have a hunch I know why they died. Let me tell you, I sense a tangled web of attempted deception like none average American manhood has yet to weave.

Quinn: Do the authorities know anything as of yet?

Brandy: Nothing that I know of, but several strangers are sleuthing around. I've noticed that. I figure it's something to do with those deaths.

Quinn: Unless there's something else you don't know about.

Brandy: Anything around here is possible.

Quinn: What's soon to come out in the wash, you reckon?

Brandy: Heaven above only knows. I figure a truck load of people laying around with one another, and Lord knows who and what else.

Quinn: That's at the least. There's more junk than that going on. I hear ole Heidi has a counseling business up town, operated by grant money she has funneled through here and back into the other enterprise.

Brandy: How do you know that, with you being only a scholar?

Quinn: When one knows what people's fetishes and habits are, finding anything out is very possible. I'm here to tell you, there's no such thing as loyalty when one is in need of the right fix, and you have the guiding light to it. I've almost seen it all.

Brandy: Damn, and you are so young, Quinn.

Quinn: I've crammed three whole lives into one already.

Brandy: I mean, I've seen my day, but my days were mild compared to only what I know of yours, and I was much older than you.

Quinn: Honestly, once one moves around inside a place such as this long enough, the astonishment of what she is introduced into eventually passes, and one

begins to see where certain lines connect.

Brandy: Well, I'm only the woman at the front desk. In case you've noticed I seldom ever go into the back there, or even walk around this place anywhere in general.

Quinn: You know, if somebody somewhere doesn't upset the boat, all of this mess would pass and the guilty would go Scott-Free.

Brandy: I hear no evil or see no evil, I only work here. If I was tangled up and pushed, maybe I would spill some beans for the purpose of untangling myself, but in general, never. I care, but I don't care at the same time.

Quinn: And I am enemy to none, except she who stole my precious son.

Brandy: I've never heard it said exactly like that before.

Quinn: So much has been said in a short few words, to be honest.

Brandy: A few words usually go the farthest.

Quinn: A few words go straight to the heart.

Brandy: You're right. The only things that can reach a person's heart faster than a few well-said words are the love of gold and bullets.

Quinn: So button your seat down very tightly. Its soon to be a rough and wild ride around here.

Brandy & Quinn exit

Sometime later back in Earl's office

Enter Mr. West

Earl: Mr. West, so nice to see you, eh?

Mr. West: It's good to see you and everybody again too.

Earl: What's it? Where are the blue-ticks leading you these days?

Mr. West: Well, they bark, and their bark is loud and clear. They always follow the scent directly to its source every time.

Earl: Is anything good a-stir, Mr. West?

Mr. West: I don't know, to be honest about everything. I might need your handy assistance.

Earl: Certainly, how might I be?

Mr. West: You got yer computer handy I presume?

Earl: Yes, right here at my desk. What about it?

Mr. West: You know there's a veiled three hundred and sixty degree camera in stalls three, nine, and the one where the Cajun Queen is, right?

Earl: Yeah, what about it? By now there's cameras everywhere and in all of the Stalls.

Mr. West: Well, in that case you knew there was one inside the tool shed, did you not?

Earl: Sort of, but what about it?

Mr. West: I have a pen drive here. *(lays it before him on his computer table)* You need to examine all of this very well. Two different pen drives were inside the pink box inside the front counter out there. I think I know who dropped me two. What I don't know is who dropped in the third pen

drive, especially when it damned the person I am almost certain dropped on the other two. Make no mistake about it, I know who actually slipped those ultra powerful opium pills to the two scholars. The intent was there to cause the deaths of these two persons. I also know precisely where payment on one of these hits originated.

Earl: I'm numbed. I don't know what to say, Mr. West. Are you insinuating I had something to do with this?

Mr. West: No I am not, but you still need a lawyer assigned to this case immediately. First, however, you need to watch the clips on this pen drive. I've cut all of the dead spaces out for you. Each clip is filled with raw action that you simply will not believe.

Earl: What are you talking about?

Mr. West: I've already summoned the police here early tomorrow morning. There is no running or hiding for anybody. I've taken all precautions with thorough examinations, Earl.

Earl: I can't believe this madness! Why don't you simply tell me what's up with This?

Mr. West: Watch the clips on that drive ASAP. Your understanding of this and what has been going on, is one hundred percent vital to this case being a Success. Don't fall over dead from a heart attack after seeking this, might I warn you, Earl. All of us need you to stick around for a while.

Earl: *(places the pen drive into his computer and pulls up the screen. Eases backwards into his chair watching the show. Ten minutes later rears up out of his seat in utter astonishment)* What! Oh the utter horror and disgust of this. My own wife! Look! I can't believe it! Oh, the curse that shall follow me and all that is mine, the infamy, the negativity. She cuts a deal with Dakota and Dakota bumps Candy. But look at this other gross garbage. There she is with Candy Girl! My gosh! Oh the filth and the drama. Have mercy, sir. Don't

speak of it. I'll take care of her myself. Give her to me. Let me serve justice to its fullest due.

Mr. West: You finish watching this, and my man and myself will visit you, your wife, and this facility soon at first light tomorrow. Remember, forget running. Nobody runs or hides. Get your attorney ASAP. Maybe you had better not inform your wife of this matter, but get herself and you a lawyer tomorrow. My man shall enter inside and do his job upon order in the morning. Allow us to handle things, then you pay bail. Bail is only ten percent of the total, then she'll be out. You'll have a lawyer I'm sure who can slide her and yourself through any hoops that might be set up for you .

Earl: *(face in both hands, whining)* But..., I'll be ruined after all of this hits the media.

Mr. West: Yes, so very ruined shall you both be after this mess, but it's life and the price we all must pay when we play. Face the music and bite the bullet. It's all there is remaining to do. I'm so sorry Mr. Clemm.

Stage lights dim.Mr. West, Earl exit

Scene 5

Later that evening in Earl & Heidi's home den area

Enter Earl through the front door

Heidi: How was your day, love?

Earl: Frightful at best, shocking and disgusting at worst. And yours?

Heidi: Another day in the ole doo-doo hole for me. *(sighs)* You know, we've turned millions over the past four years we've owned this business. We've dumped

several million into a fine eight percent dividend fund. We turn nine thousand a month from it. That's so nice, don't you think?

Earl: Yeah? Then what? Another grand venture of some sort?

Heidi: No, it's like this.. Why don't we purchase a nice home by the beach on the island of Crete in a killer neighborhood of some sort? I mean, picture this.. We, you and I, could be by the sea, taking long morning walks, sipping great coffee and wine in a latte' shop and being surrounded by superb intellectual company. We both could be gone so fast nobody will have time to think it's all funny.

Earl: Yeah love, the picture sounds great, just you and I...

Heidi: Let's make it reality, and soon, eh?

Earl: Maybe...

Heidi: Look out there and imagine it for a moment, if you will. We can investigate the real estate in Crete online. I'll bet for two hundred fifty thousand we can nail a fabulous home there. A couple hundred more will fetch us some nice yard space to go with it. We could have a garden for romanticists, with ponds, flowers, statues of Greek Gods, and poets underneath weeping willow trees, all for us and our company to carouse around in, sipping exquisite wine and consorting in fine intellectual gatherings. We could even be the host of outstanding literary and artistic events, you know?

Earl: The thought really excites me, Heidi, to speak the truth.

Heidi: I know a couple who lives six months on shore here in the US, and six months offshore on Crete. They say they rent out their place on Crete for the six they are there, and do the same for their place here. They rent to well-to-do American retirees in both places. They turn four grand a month. They might be the happiest couple I know, to be frank about it, Earl.

Earl: The picture looks really good and sounds great.

Heidi: I'm tired of this school and medical facility we own. I mean, it got us where we are, for sure. I'm tired of the complaining from people in the surrounding areas, from the negative media coverage we've been receiving, the death threats.. I'm tired of it all.

Earl: So what are you proposing for the school? You always were a very creative risk taker, Heidi.

Heidi: Look Hoss, this is what we shall do.. Think about this now.. Everybody is seeking out a quick buck to be made, right? I've had four people seek me out about purchasing this school already.

Earl: What four? You never told me anything about them. That's four more than any I ever knew about.

Heidi: You know Jim Boyar?

Earl: One of our scholar's parents, you mean?

Heidi: Yeah, that's the one. All of our scholar's parents are filthy rich. They are anything but local yokels. I mean, little Jeannie Jillion's father is a gold medal olympic professional bowler, for crying out loud. We see him on TV from time to time. He is game for our enterprise, Earl..

Earl: Yeah? I'm making notes...

Heidi: Then there is tiny Tina Terror, and her father owns the famous Starlight Tensile Band with all of those number one hits. Her father pulled me around the corner only four days ago to speak of investing.

Earl: Yeah, I know who you are talking about.

Heidi: Then lastly we have Gretchin Graybater. Here father owns the castle on the

hill overlooking the Rhine he rents out, and the more famous luxuriant, Pequot Hotel in Stenzilland, Germany.

Earl: This sounds like a genius plan, my love! That's why I love you more by the day. I'm always discovering new reasons to know I made the best choice possible in having you for my dear wife. I find new revelations on a near daily basis being in your company.

Heidi: I'm glad you do, love. And I love you even more for it.

Earl: So what's the plan from there?

Heidi: Well, these people have all agreed to buy us out upon our request. But I have a very sly plan instead, Earl.

Earl: Fill me in. I want to know it all!

Heidi: We will set a price, a damn good price and nothing less. My bet is that all parties mentioned will bite at it, and that's alright. We'll drop the price five percent to begin with should they not, but I know they'll still bite. We will drop our price ten percent if we must, and they will definitely bite if they haven't already, and that's alright. We'll drop five more percent, and should they still buck, we will go down for twenty percent in total as a bottom dropping amount, but they shall owe us an indefinite ten percent monthly royalty fee.

Earl: What if they dump the school?

Heidi: The indefinite royalty fee will still carry. Even if somebody demolishes the school in time, the land underneath and everything else they may put on it, shall revert back into our ownership.

Earl: Yeah lady, that much sounds like the lady I remember marrying! We get the whole farm to begin again.

Heidi: Not on your chance, honey! Remember that. When we get that place on Crete, we'll franchise and farm it all out, then relax backward and draw that cash, living cheerfully to the max ever after. Forget me pulling any hot rods or pushing any pens, I'm done with all of that monkey business, for evermore.

Earl: I'll say, with a plan like that, and your other fine plans, you'll most certainly be done-for, for ever more!

Heidi: Yeah, (*deeply sighs*) eat your heart out Grant Cardone!

Stage Lights dim out. Earl, Heidi exit

Morning time back in the office at the academy

Enter Heidi & Jezebel

Heidi: So much to do, so little time available.

Jezebel: That's why good people farm it all out. The owners don't need to be doing all of that work.

Heidi: Yeah, my plan is to farm it out all right.

Jezebel: Everything can be farmed out. Hell, these little dogs here should be doing something damn productive for the facility.

Heidi: They do, they do, don't you worry about it.

Front door: (*heavy Knock! Knock! Knock!*)

Jezebel: Who on earth, this early in the morning?

Heidi: Go see.

Jezebel: (*walks, opens door*) My stars and bars! What's it?

Enter three policemen

One policeman: Look. (*points, Dakota is ushered in handcuffs by two more policemen past the door toward the squad car out from*)

Dakota: All of you dirty rotten good for nothing bitches and whores! All of you will rot in hell for getting my name tangled up in your garbage. I can't believe this.

Dakota and the two policemen exit

Jezebel: What's going on? What is she being locked up for?

First policeman: Suspicion of murder.

2nd policeman: Is Heidi Clemm in, lady?

Jezebel: There she sits in her office. We are the only one's here right now. What's up with her?

2nd policeman: (*steps forward across the threshold*) She's under arrest for suspicion of murder and taking indecent liberties with minors as Well.

Jezebel: My gosh! What's going on here? Somebody tell me something!

3rd policeman: (*steps forward across threshold*)

2nd policeman: Are you Heidi Clemm?

Heidi: That I am. What's it? What the hell is going on here?

2nd policeman: Get up, turn around, and place your hands behind your back, now.

First and third policeman rush inside with pistols drawn

Heidi: (*screaming loudly*) What is this? What is going on? What is the meaning of this? Oh the hectic patterns of washed out artwork, oh and many midnight dreams, only to one day find success and have it shorn from underneath one's feet at the same moment!

First policeman: (*rushes up, grabbing the hands, placing on the cuffs*) Everything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to remain silent.

Heidi: (*screaming, crying*) What did I do? What am I charged with?

First policeman: You are being charged with accessory to murder, taking indecent liberties with a minor, and tax evasion!

Heidi: Oh the word! What are you speaking of? (*as she is being dragged to the squad car parked out front*) What have I done? The word, the word, oh the word of this, woe is me! Have mercy and offer prayers on my behalf, please. Woe is me. I'm ruined, oh how I'm ruined for life! (*weeps as she is forced into the car*)

Heidi, First Policeman, Second policeman, Third policeman, Jezebel exits

Stage lights fade out, curtains fall

Act 4

Scene 1

At the medical office later that day

Enter Earl and Sherri

Earl: Did the needed meds arrive as of yet?

Sherri: 'Tis mighty early in the morning still yet for you to be asking.

Earl: An early check saves time. We need it now.

Sherri: Return around eleven hundred or so. They 'll probably be in by then.

Earl: Look, since I can't find my wife around anywhere, I have a job for you in your spare time between now and this time tomorrow.

Sherri: I'm busy but always available at the last minute.

Earl: Here (*hands her a torn folded slip of paper*) call these names when you can. The numbers are listed. You are good at negotiating, I've noticed. Tell them you are my right hand secretary, which you are in a sense. Ask them if they are interested in buying the school and medical facility. Let me know what they say.

Sherri: So, are you selling out on the facility, it seems?

Earl: Who knows? It's a good thought if the price is right.

Sherri: What does Heidi think about all of this?

Earl: She's all game for it. I'm researching to see if my plan is functional.

Sherri: Oh, so have you heard the word?

Earl: On what?

Sherri: Have you been to the office area yet?

Earl: Not yet, but I will, why?

Sherri: The police arrived on campus first thing this morning.

Earl: What was the problem?

Sherri: I don't know for sure, but they cuffed Dakota and your wife, carrying them both away in the squad car.

Earl: My word, how be this impetuous situation? On what charges?

Sherri: Dakota on charges of murder. Your wife was arrested for being an accessory to murder and for taking indecent liberties with minors.

Earl: My word, what on earth will be next around here? *(hangs his head, smacks his face with both opened palms)*

Sherri: She and Dakota will be staring at big fines and hard-time, I know it!

Earl: There's not much myself or anybody can do to help Dakota, but I'll have to see about Heidi. Let me motor out. I'll be back in a bit.

Sherri: Don't forget your wallet. The much-needed liberating amount will most certainly be a doozie. I'm most certain of that detail, Earl.

Earl: You don't forget those calls. Until next time..

Sherri: Later on for sure.

Earl: All of this will devastated Heidi. She is so temperamental.

Sherri: Good luck to you and Heidi.

Sherri exits

Down at the local jail house

Enter Earl

Earl: *(walks up to door and pushes speaker button)* I'm here to see Heidi Clemm.

Voice on speaker: I'm Phill Hall. I'm the head jailer here. What business do you have with Heidi Clemm?

Earl: I'm her husband, Earl Clemm. I want to speak with her for a minute.

Voice on speaker: Visitation time is on Sunday evenings only. Come back at O eight hundred Sunday.

Earl: What must I do to get her out?

Voice on speaker: Pay ten percent of the bail up front and now.

Earl: How much is her bail set at?

Voice on speaker: Her bail has been set at a million dollars in full. Pay me one hundred thousand now and she is out until her court date.

Earl: I have it in a cashier check at this moment.

Window on the door opens. Earl fills check out

Earl: Here. *(passes the check through the opened window on the jailhouse door)*
Here is the check.

Phill Hall: Where do you work at to pitch this kind of dough, pops?

Earl: I own and operate The Sunrise Plantation Estate right down the road there.

Phill Hall: What is that? What do you sell?

Earl: We are a mental treatment facility and an academic academy.

Phill Hall: Let me take this check and make a phone call. I'll be right back.

Window closes

Three minutes later window opens

Phill Hall: Give me five minutes. If all checks out I'll return with Heidi.

Phill Hall exits. Three minutes later he returns with Heidi

Heidi: (*weeping bitterly*) I can't believe this! I'm ruined. I have now lost all that I rightfully have won. What am I to do? Woe is me! I'll ne'er again see any golden sun.

Earl: Come on with me now and walk over to the pickup truck. (*extends his right hand. Takes her left arm*) Oh, it'll be o.k. Now cheer up here girl!

Heidi: Oh, it's certainly not going to be o.k. We'll lose everything we've worked for, for sure. We will be outcasts from our well earned social networks. Oh, the dread of such horrible occurrences!

Earl: Aw now, this mess will soon pass and you'll be laughing about all of this. Just you wait and see now! Come on here girl, chin up, life is life we all misstep. To err is to be human. Kudos to whoever it was who said that first!

Heidi: Wait a minute here... Where are we riding off too?

Earl: To the house, of course. Where else would you want to go?

Heidi: Why?

Earl: To drop you off, of course. Why else would I go?

Heidi: Where are you going off too?

Earl: Back to work. Where else would I be going?

Heidi: You mean, you are not staying here with me, Earl?

Earl: I'm sorry Heidi, but I have so much work I need to do. I'll be back this evening, however. Be calm. All will be perfectly well now, you just wait and see.

Heidi: But you can't leave me like this. The media will be all over our place, if they are not there already! I can't take this. *(weeps)* It's all driving me mad, and all of this is because of you, Earl! Don't do me like this, please...

Truck pauses on the street before the house

Earl: *(faces Heidi)* Well, I'll be back, love. Allow me to escort you to the front door.

Earl escorts Heidi to the front door of their home. Opens door for her

Heidi: Don't leave me like this! You are such a horrible husband. I hate you with all of my heart! *(weeping, screaming)* I should have never married you to begin with, like all of my family told me over the years!

Earl: Chau now. Don't worry, all will be just fine in the end. Cheer up, stay calm

Pauses as he opens the door, Earl waves to her as she enters, he turns and exits

Heidi: *(slams door shut, stands by the sink and the bar, weeping hysterically)* Oh, I'll never live this down. What a huge mess I've made. What can I do? Where might I go to escape my dreadful fate? What's next for me? I shudder to dream of my horrible fate!

Heidi seizes a butcher knife from counter drawer, stabs herself in the chest, falls

onto floor, then dies

Scene 2

Three months later..

*The main congregation area in Cathedral of The Sacred Heart
Houston, Texas*

Enter the priest, Earl, Sherri

Priest: Have you, Sherri Locopreao, come here to enter into marriage without coercion, freely and wholeheartedly?

Sherri: Yes sir, I have, of my own choice and free will.

Priest: Are both of you prepared, as you follow the path of marriage, to love and honor each other, for as long as you both shall live?

Sherri: Yes, for as long as we both shall live.

Earl: Yes, for as long as we both shall live.

Priest: Are you both prepared to accept children lovingly from God?

Sherri: Yes, and with no apprehension or contention.

Earl: Yes, and with no apprehension or contention.

Priest: Do you, Sherri Locopreao, take this man, Earl Clemm for your lawful wedded husband, to have and to hold, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part?

Sherri: I do.

Priest: Do you, Earl Clemm, take this woman, Sherri Locopreao, for your lawful wedded wife, to have and to hold, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part?

Earl: I do.

Priest: Do both of you as man and wife, vow to serve the church, as apostate, as skilled craft persons, as dutiful, loyal dedicated servants of God and Christ, for the remainder of your earthly lives?

Sherri: I do.

Earl: I do.

Priest: By the powers invested in me first from the hand of God Almighty, next from the laws of man and the great state of Texas, I announce your marriage first unto the church and the kingdom of God, then unto each other , for the remainder of your mortal lives.

Both turn holding hands, facing the clapping congregation, then bow

Priest: Sir, you may now kiss the bride.

Earl: *(Raises veil, kisses the bride deeply)*

The congregation: Ooo, wow! *(clap)*

Priest: *(raises both hands)* There is a small reception out by the gazebo in the yard area outside. Everyone is free to gravitate in that direction.

By the gazebo

Sherri: Boy, the orderbs are outstanding. I can't believe it! Who was kind enough

to arrange this? I know this church as its own event planner and nothing here is second rate. That is one reason I chose to do things here.

Earl: With the right kind of deal all things are possible. (*pours two glasses of champagne*) Cheers my love, to life, freedom, and outstanding success!

Sherri: Have you seen anybody here we know yet?

Earl: I keep searching.

Man approaches newly wedded couple

Man: Hello, I couldn't help but drop by and say a word.

Sherri: Well, we are so glad that you did. We were just asking one another if we noticed anybody around that we actually knew right off hand.

Man: Well, both of you have spoken to me on the phone enough. Everything we covered and signed over the internet. The photographs we saw surely must have been outdated or somehow distorted. I would have never recognized either one of you in real life otherwise.

Sherri: I apologize, but I can't match a face with a name, sir.

Man: My name is Jim Boyer. Myself and Miss Tina Terror recently purchased the treatment facility. My, (*chuckles*) it's such a beautiful colorful place, I must say.

Sherri: (*nervously clears throat*) That it most certainly is. I'm certain you and Miss Terror will enjoy it fully.

Jim Boyer: To be frank, we will not be managing it at all. We've already subbed out the management to a company specializing in such a thing. The company is called *The Right Way*. They specialize in managing medical facilities and schools. All reports indicate where they execute a

splendid service.

Earl: Well, look at it this way, you can't ever go wrong with the right way! Cheers!

Jim Boyer: Cheers, and to success!

The wedded couple and Jim Boyer hoist their glasses

Earl: So where is your other half?

Jim Boyer: She's around here. I guess I had better make off to find her. Before I go, where is the honeymoon planned to be, for the sake of making interesting conversation?

Sherri: It's all on the spur of the moment. (*laughs*) I like things that way, honestly. No hard and fast plans for me.

Jim Boyer: Well, (*nods, smiles*) best of luck to the both of you.

Jim Boyer exits

Earl: That's interesting. Did you invite him?

Sherri: I didn't. I never sent invitations out to anybody. I wanted a stranger's walk in-wedding personally. My question is why? Why did he show up here? What might have been his motivation for coming?

Earl: He knows us up and close now.

Sherri: That's why I didn't tell him anything about where we are headed next.

Earl: Yeah, and for the long term, for good..

*Three hours later at the Houston International airport
By the checkout counter*

Enter Earl, Sherri, ticket attendant

Sherri (*approaches the counter*) We've purchased tickets to Heraklion. We're scheduled to exit out today.

Ticket attendant: (*punches computer keyboard*) Who else is flying out with you, mam?

Sherri: My new husband, Earl Clemm here. We were just married today.

Ticket attendant: Ok, I see here. Do you have the marriage certificate, a stand in if not the original copy?

Sherri: I do, right here.. (*passes paper copy across counter*)

Ticket attendant: Do you have a valid passport?

Sherri: Yes we both do. (*Earl hands over his. Sherri passes both across counter*)

Ticket attendant: (*Punches keypad*) Excellent, out standing (*reaches down below counter, rips paper*) Here are you and your husband's boarding passes. Tickets are digital, but here are your confirmation notices. Where are your bags?

Earl: Here are our bags. (*pulls up two large suitcases*)

Ticket attendant: Outstanding! Place the suitcases on the rotary belt there, and you'll both be good to go.

Earl: (*places two suitcases up on rotary belt*)

Ticket attendant: Walk to the right. Your boarding area is at C-14. You are exiting

out in an hour and a half. Enjoy your first class flight with Agean airlines. Bon voyage!

Forty minutes later in the C-14 waiting area

Enter Sherri and Earl

Announcement: C-14 will be boarding in thirty minutes. First class will board first, then all others to follow.

Sherri: I'm so nervous. I can't imagine why.

Earl: Relax doll, flying always has made me nervous. Its a new place we're traveling too, and it's our new permanent home. I'm so excited!

Sherri: *(nervously glancing around)* Do you see anybody you know?

Earl: Not a soul. No, not a single soul out on patrol.

Sherri: There is a woman donning a rainbow dress up ahead. She's a very attractive Woman, to say the least. For some reason she appears too familiar, yet I can't match a name with that face.

Earl: It's such an unusual colorful dress I might add, but done so professionally attractive and in good taste. I honestly can't say that I recognize her at all.

Sherri: Look Earl, she just turned around smiling broadly and nodded toward me. Her fashionable hat is so ultra-attractive. I want one like hers, Earl.

Earl: She probably paid five hundred dollars for that hat, if not more.

Ticket attendant: Passports please, and tickets.

Earl and Sherri hand over passports and tickets

Ticket attendant: *(rips end from boarding tickets)* Thank you, and enjoy your flight with Aegean airlines.

Earl: Which seats do we have, Sherri?

Sherri: The boarding passes say J twelve and thirteen, A and B.

Earl and Sherri enter plane, walk down aisle

Earl: Well I'll be damned! Look who's sitting in seat C.

Sherri: Yeah, it's the lady in the fabulous rainbow dress and hat. I can't believe this. I'm so happy to be in her company! Life is wonderful, to say the least

Sherri: *(steps down the row. Takes seat in B)*

Earl: *(steps down row. Takes seat in A at the end toward the aisle)*

All passengers move in to take assigned seats

Pilot: Alright, welcome all, aboard Aegean Airlines. Weather is sunny and clear, warm, no rain forecasted until next week, so your weekend in Heraklion, Crete, will be nothing less than extraordinary, to say the least. As we always say, please leave no bags unattended and make sure all seat belts are buckled. In a few moments we shall be lifting off into the infinite beyond. No walking allowed down the aisle to the restrooms until we stabilize in the air above. Lift off will arrive in ten minutes at most. Wine, drinks in general, and food will be served upon stabilization. As always, please enjoy your flight with Aegean Airlines.

Lady in seat C: *(faces Sherri, smiles warmly, nods)* Hello, I noticed you both on-boarding. Couldn't help but to smile and nod. How are you two today?

Sherri: Oh honey, Earl and I are doing fabulous! Earl owned a big time treatment

facility and academic academy. We just sold it. Honey, give me blessings, cause I know right where the gold sits in my world! That's such a beautiful dress and hat you are wearing, I must say. I couldn't help but to notice. It speaks loudly but does so in such professionally applied good taste. I must compliment you on it.

Lady in seat C: Thank you so much, my fine lovely doll. Your kind compliment means so much to me.

Sherri: Forgive me for asking, but I can't help but to ask your name. You seem somewhat familiar. Mine is Sherri Clemm now. I was the chief medic at the Scurlock treatment facility, known as The Sunrise Plantation Estate.

Lady in seat C: *(smiles)* You know, I've heard about that place myself. All I've ever heard are fine things, I want ya both to know. My name is Reginald. Friends call me Regeana, while really good friends call me Reggi. I'm an electrician by trade. Imagine that my lady, li'le ole me, an electrician! I run my own business. I service many decent folks in need, from nearly every perspective of consideration.

Sherri: *(gasps, covers mouth, swallows hard)* Oh, there is so much I should know, but I don't know about everything. I am at a loss for words, I might say right about now. *(tightly closes eyes, weeps)* Help me, please dear God, help me if you can...

Lady in seat C: *(faces Sherri, smiles)* Well love, does the name Gretchin Graybater mean anything to you? She is a really good friend of mine. Her partner on the side is also a good friend of Walston and Jeffries. You know little girl, the two tremendously passionate hens with the spectacular hinny humps who adopted two girls named Ellie Mae and one they called Candy Girl. *(chuckles loudly)* I forget where exactly these two girls resided, but it most certainly wasn't in their adopted homes.

Sherri: (*commences waving her hands, breathing heavily*) That story is so Disturbing. Help me, dear God save me!

Lady in seat C: Well, Walston and Jeffries wanted me to get to the root of their family tragedy. And honey, if I'm not very good at anything else, I'm the world's best at getting down to the root of anything. (*chuckles*) You know, their two daughters, Ellie Mae and Candy Girl were found dead. I told them I knew exactly how to approach the problem, if both would do me a kind favor in exchange.

And do you know what, honey? Both came through with flying colors, let me tell ya! Missy, I haven't had so much fun in years. Nothing is sweeter for my soul than havin' a really hungry kitty cat down on her delicate knees before me worshiping her dear goddess, and another every bit as hungry behind me, doing some of the same as hard as her sweet little soul can pour out upon me! This double pleasure was far more than such a poor delicate li'le heart as mine can take. Purrrr-wow!

Well, there is this detective from way back east in South Carolina called Charleston West who is handling the case. He had a woman he knew indebted to him, do a kind deed for me, in exchange for me getting to the root of these cruel murders. I was hung up on a hook myself to be honest about the situation, so when he agreed to let me slide off plus the gracious favor from his lady friend, I had absolutely no problem in coming through with the humble request. I'll accomplish the task assigned my dear lady, in my own style, in my own time.

Like they always say about me honey. I rule the roost in any hen house 'cause I walk silently while carrying a great big stick, and I know exactly how to use it, let me tell ya. I also educate myself on specifically what people's most secret, enticingly debauched woodshed cravings are. (*pauses, glares*) When I am well paid to do a job honey, I *always* see my job through until the last domino falls.

Sherri: (*Chokes, grabs throat*) Help me, I'm dying! I'm dying! Water, fetch me some water please.. (*waves arms hysterically*) somebody, help!

Earl: Flight attendant! Flight attendant! Fetch us a bottle of water please. (*turns toward Sherri*) What happened? (*snaps around toward Reggi*) What did you say to my wife, lady? How dare you intimidate her like this. Help, a medic please! Help! Anybody..

Plane jets down the runway, lifting off into the skies beyond

Earl, Sherri, Reggi, ticket attendant exit, stage lights gradually fade out, curtains fall

THE END

Slang terms and definitions

- (1) Calla Lilies - lesbians
- (2) Smooch- A deep intimate sexual relationship
- (3) Apache - opioid
- (4) Treble Apache- extremely powerful fentanyl
- (5) Wing queen - An unfaithful lesbian lover
- (6) Dog - A bisexual whore.
- (7) Double slap - make it stronger
- (8) Felines - Lesbians who have sex without emotional involvement or making lasting commitments.
- (9) Backdoor Butch - One who has no ties and specializes in secret debauched fetishes, especially with those she knows are already in relationships.
- (10) Cotton - angel dust. Can also describe cocaine.
- (11) Puppy dog- A female who enjoys being petted by a lover, and giving treats.
- (12) Dead fish - A lesbian who isn't good in bed, and tends to neglect cleaning out her private areas.
- (13) Pussy cat - A lesbian anxious for sexual encounters.
- (14) Huffing, puffing - Heavily caught up into the action, whatever it might be.

